THE EDITORS: SADDAM'S VICTORY, AMERICA'S DEFEAT

MARCH 16, 1998 • $3.50

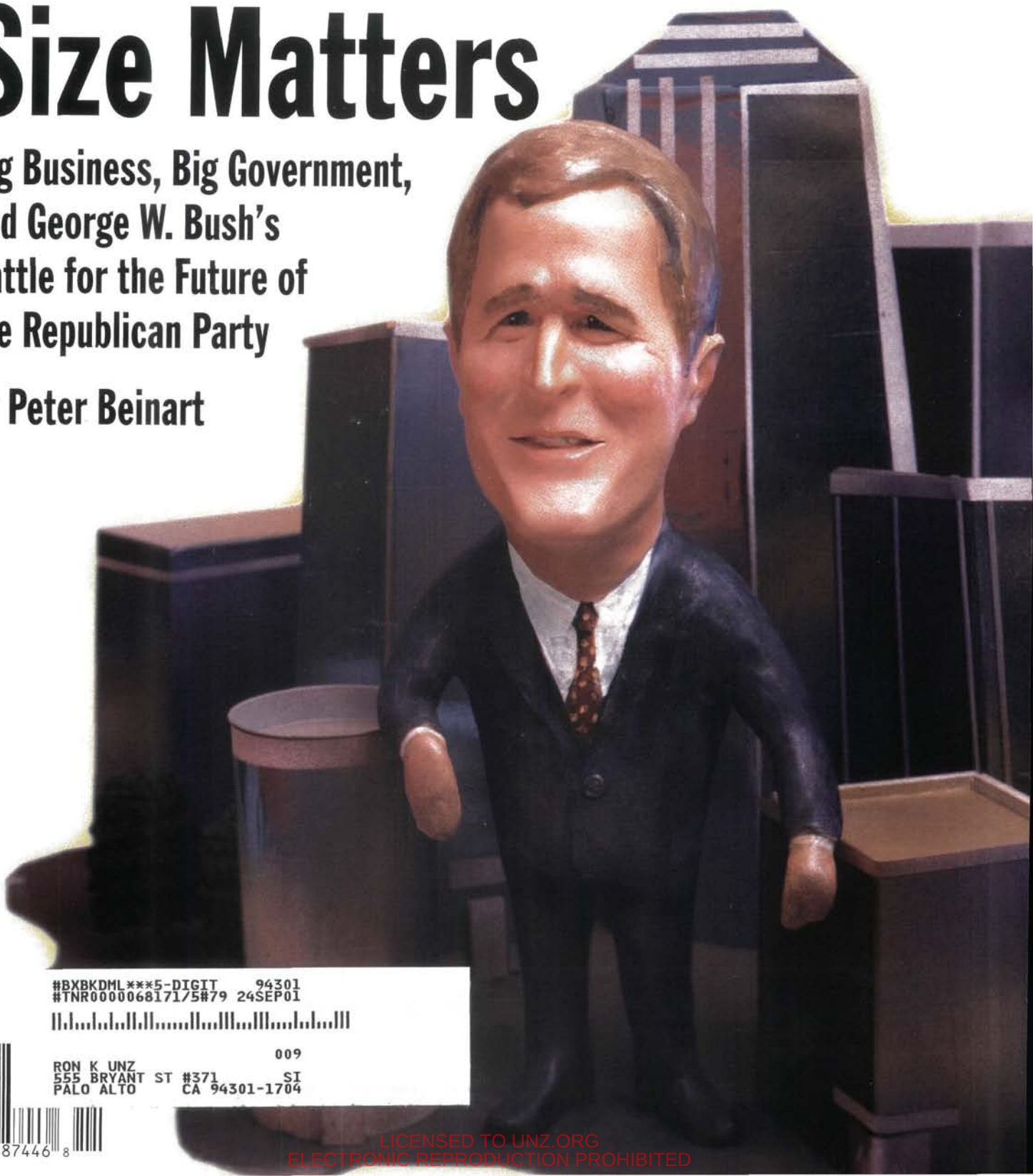
THE NEW REPUBLIC

David Grann: The Kooks of Columbus • Jeffrey Rosen: Paula Jones's Prying

Size Matters

Big Business, Big Government, and George W. Bush's Battle for the Future of the Republican Party

by Peter Beinart



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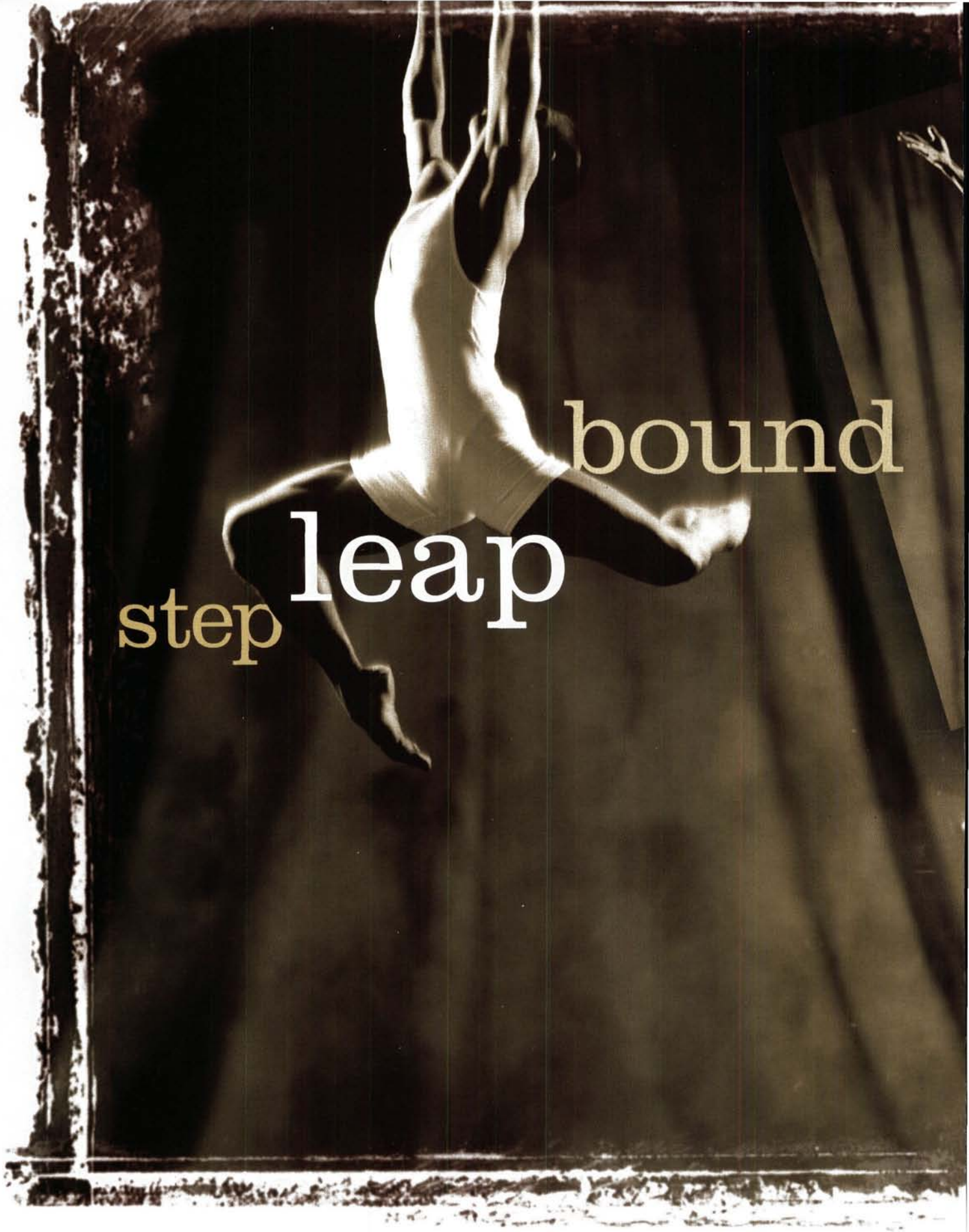

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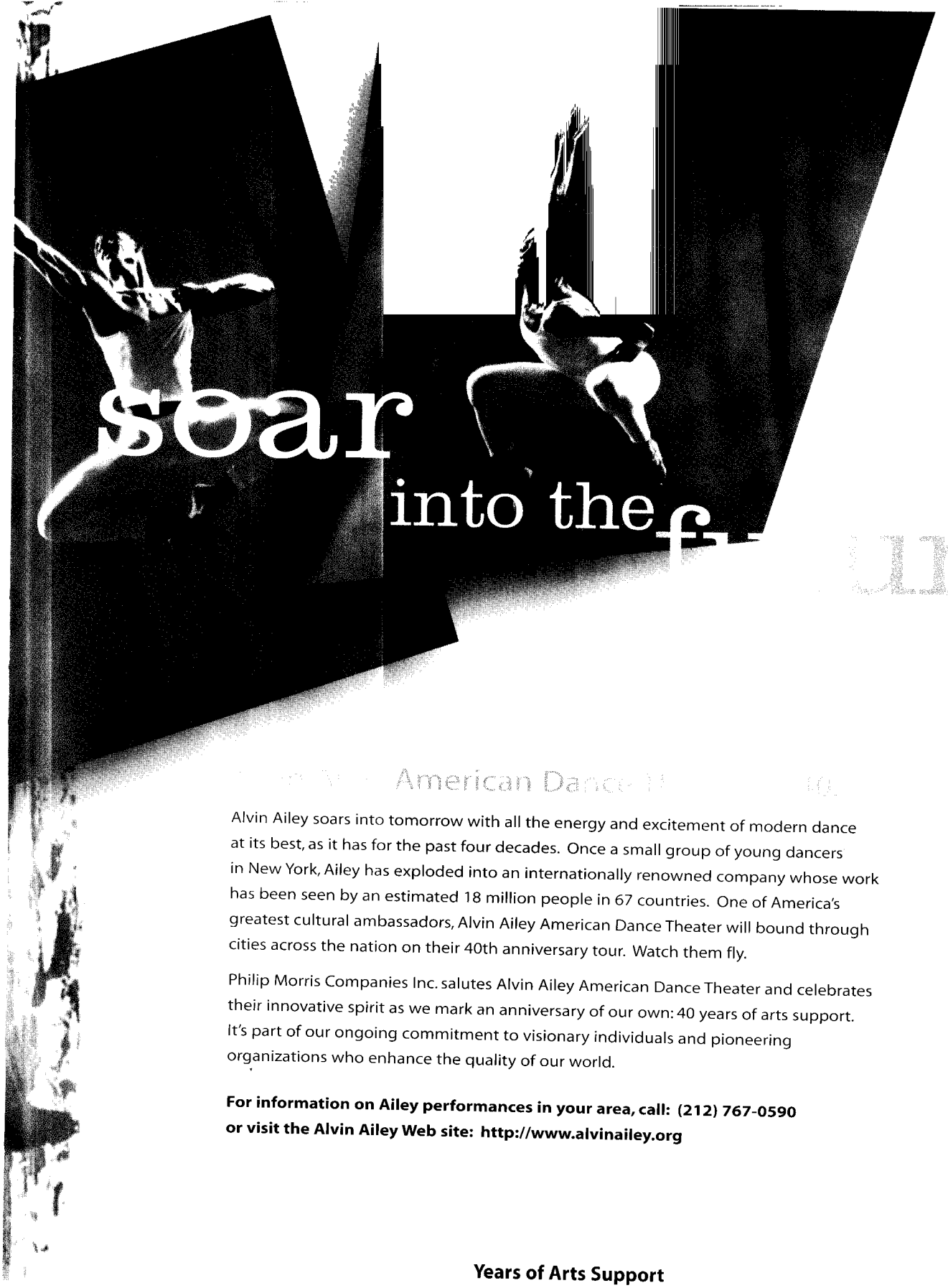

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CORRESPONDENCE

Liberalisms

To the editors:

Sean Wilentz ("Money for Nothing," February 9) is right that liberals have often been successfully tarred by their adversaries as little more than starry-eyed spendthrifts on behalf of the poor. But he's on shakier ground when he suggests that the most important contributions of liberal policymaking have been non-public-spending programs which attempted to correct imbalances of power or other systemic injustices.

I'd be, literally, the last to slight the achievements of labor or civil rights legislation, but one should also not underestimate the enduring importance of the interstate highway system, Medicare's enormous success at lowering the poverty rate among the elderly, the space program and the microcomputer industry it spawned, and, yes, the defense outlays that held Soviet power at bay while contributing to America's supremacy in aerospace.

It's arguable that even the labor-law reform Wilentz urges might have a significant, if indirect, redistributive effect—which is why it's a good idea.

Liberals cannot afford to lose sight of the political problems of thoughtlessly regarding government as a bottomless dispensary of goodies. But the folly of simplistic balanced budget economics, or fear of its continuing popular appeal, should not prevent liberals from proposing programs that advance the general welfare simply because of cost.

ANDREW ROTSTEIN
Brooklyn, New York

Hagel storm

To the editors:

I was puzzled by Jason Zengerle's statement ("Hagelianism," February 9) that Nebraska Senator Chuck Hagel "comes from a state that doesn't have an obvious stake in the [global warming] pact." Wyoming's Powder River Basin is a major source of low-sulfur coal, and most of that coal moves through Nebraska via the Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Union Pacific railroads. Both carriers have made substantial investments in tracks, signals, yards, cars, and locomotives to handle this business, which now generates some 50 loaded trains per day. A visit to Alliance (on the BNSF) or North Platte (on the U.P.) would quickly demonstrate the importance of coal to the Nebraska economy and might lead Zengerle to revise his assessment of Hagel's motives.

DONALD K. PARK II
Fort Collins, Colorado

Not that bad a seed

To the editors:

Human cloning raises all kinds of hard questions worthy of attention, but for Jean Bethke Elshtain ("Bad Seed," February 9) to take Richard Seed seriously and develop moral and theological rebuttals to his kooky ideas is as inexplicable as the national exposure Seed has conned from the press. Seed may indeed be a Harvard-trained physicist with intentions to form a partnership with

ALFRED KAZIN: REMEMBERING VARIAN FRY
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THE RIGHT TRACK?
Clinton, the GOP, and the New Politics of Surplus
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God and win a Nobel Prize, but he hasn't the resources or the know-how to clone much of anything.

MATTHEW R. GLUCKSBERG
Chicago, Illinois

Jean Bethke Elshtain replies:

All sorts of dangerous wackos—that's the technical term I believe—have been treated as jokes and simpletons, and societies lived to regret it. People with Seed's ideas and capacity for publicity bear watching before they rush in to occupy the ground Seed has plowed.

Be nice to Italy

To the editors:

Michael Sean Winters makes a gratuitously bigoted remark about Italy when he says that the Catholic Church "can live with shoddy economics and confused politics" because its seat—"after all"—resides in Italy ("Old Faithful," February 9). As a student of Church history, he ought to know that, beginning with the Renaissance, it is precisely because the Church is centered in Rome that initiatives for the political and cultural reform of the peninsula were stifled.

Perhaps he would like to contribute to the moral and intellectual reformation of both Italy and the Catholic Church by supporting a movement to relocate the Holy See from Rome to the United States. Who knows? Economic globalization (capitalist Catholicism) might eventually be wedded to religious internationalism (pious Catholicism).

BENEDETTO FONTANA
New York, New York

Unmitigating circumstances

To the editors:

Your February 9 editorial ("Sex, Lies, and Audiotape") is correct to admonish withholding judgment until more is known about the problems currently distracting the president.

However, your assertion that the events of the past few weeks highlight the mistakes made by a unanimous Supreme Court are unconvincing. The justices' predictions that the president would not be greatly inconvenienced by the Paula Jones litigation have been right on the mark. He has spent just one Saturday giving his deposition and perhaps some other amount of time meeting with his counsel. No doubt the litigation has proven expensive, but lawyers' fees aren't usually a reason to let people escape liability for their wrongful acts. As for the media attention, it would be curious indeed for the Supreme Court to suggest that the president should be immune to liability just because cyberjournalist Matt Drudge is eager to put out unsubstantiated rumor over the Internet.

MATTHEW RICHARDS
Chicago, Illinois

Balancing the embargo

To the editors:

Charles Lane acknowledges that our embargo hurts the Cuban people "a bit," but that this is okay as long as the embargo hurts the people "far less than [does] communism itself" ("Castro Inconvertible," February 9). Lane should reconsider his strange logic. Unless the embargo is destroying the Communist regime, which it isn't, how can the greater harm of Castroism justify the additional suffering that we impose on Cubans? If we are not destroying the regime through our hard line, how can

continued on page 41

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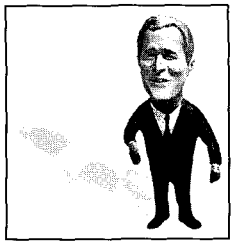

Cover by Eric Baker for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Illustration by Bruce Strachan. Article on page 21.

4 **CORRESPONDENCE** Big-spending liberals, Chuck Hagel's agenda, &c.

6 **JONATHAN COHN** TRB: MANAGED CARELESS The return of Harry and Louise.

9 **THE EDITORS** SADDAM WINS Why Kofi Annan's American-sponsored pact with the dictator of Iraq may be the biggest debacle for U.S. foreign policy since the end of the cold war. NOTEBOOK Starr v. Blumenthal, attention Karl Marx shoppers, &c.

11 **MICHAEL WALZER** THE HARD QUESTIONS: GETTING PERSONAL Morality matters in politics—as long as it's actually related to politics.

12 **FRANKLIN FOER** TOXIC SHOCK The U.N. settlement means Saddam's biological-weapons arsenal will likely survive. Be afraid. Be very afraid.

15 **DAVID GRANN** OHIO POSTCARD: ANTI-WAR ZONE A weekend with the protesters who broke up the Clinton administration's town meeting on Iraq.

17 **JEFFREY ROSEN** I PRY There is no sound legal principle behind the fishing expedition into sexual history that Paula Jones's attorneys have been conducting. Too bad Bill Clinton signed the law condoning such practices.

19 **LLOYD I. RUDOLPH AND SUSANNE HOEBER RUDOLPH** ORGANIZED CHAOS This month, 600 million voters will participate peacefully in India's national elections, proving that a multinational state can be a viable democracy.

21 **PETER BEINART** THE BIG DEBATE The fight over the Republican Party's future boils down to whether big power—public or private—is inherently threatening to freedom. The radical right thinks it is. Texas Governor George W. Bush thinks it isn't. Can his presidential aspirations survive?

26 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: IRISHMEN *The Break* is unbroken Irish cliché; George Bernard Shaw's writings on film are anything but.

27 **DAVID RIEFF** THE HUMANITARIAN ILLUSION *The Warrior's Honor: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience* by Michael Ignatieff

32 **GEOFFREY O'BRIEN** THE BIG SLEEP *Night Train* by Martin Amis

35 **MOSHE HALBERTAL** EXILE AND THE KINGDOM *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism* by Aviezer Ravitzky, translated by Michael Swirsky and Jonathan Chipman

38 **JOHN HOLLANDER** POEM *Las Hilanderas*

42 **MARGARET TALBOT** WASHINGTON DIARIST: THE EGG WOMEN

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FROM WASHINGTON

Managed careless

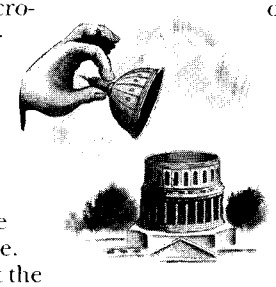
Florence Corcoran of Louisiana was in the eighth month of a high-risk pregnancy when her obstetrician ordered hospitalization. But, even after another doctor concurred, court papers allege, Corcoran's managed-care insurance company wouldn't pay for it—instead it provided ten hours a day of home care. A few days later, while the at-home nurse was off duty, the fetus went into distress and died.

That might sound like a lawsuit waiting to happen. But, when Corcoran tried to sue the insurance company, arguing that it had sacrificed her well-being for the sake of saving money, a federal appeals court handed down the bad news: under the provisions of the 1974 Employment Retirement Income Security Act, the federal law that regulates employer-paid health benefits, Corcoran could not sue for damages based on pain and suffering.

Now Republican Representative Charlie Norwood of Georgia wants to change ERISA so that it no longer exempts insurance carriers from such claims. The proposal is just one of several measures that make up what could become this year's most contentious domestic policy offensive: the effort to regulate managed care. Last week, President Clinton issued an executive order extending his "patient bill of rights"—which guarantees that patients can choose their own specialists and appeal treatment denials—to federal employees *and* to Medicaid recipients. Next week, Senator Edward Kennedy and Representative John Dingell plan to unveil an updated and more sweeping version of a patients-rights bill they first introduced last year.

Unlikely as it seems in a Republican-controlled Congress, Norwood's bill already has more than 200 cosponsors. Kennedy, meanwhile, is "dusting off the minimum-wage playbook," as one Democratic aide puts it, and the polls show widespread support for reform. So perhaps it's not surprising that the insurance industry and its allies in the business community are panicking. Operating under the banner of the "Health Benefits Coalition" and the "Coalition for Patient Choice," the groups last month kicked off an extensive lobbying campaign by taking out full-page ads in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*; they warn that the proposed reforms would drive insurance premiums sky-high, force small businesses to stop covering employees, and produce "socialized medicine." "KISS YOUR INSURANCE GOODBYE!" a recent press release blared. "IT'S CLINTONCARE II!"

Anybody with even the dimmest recollection of 1994 may find it hard to take such threats seriously. These are, after all, the same people who told us that defeating Clintoncare was the only way to avoid ending up with a micromanaged health care system, in which faceless overseers would decide what doctors we could see and what treatments we could get. Well, today most of us are in health maintenance organizations or some other form of managed care. Some improvement! At least the government bureaucrats would have been accountable, in some distant way, to the public. Private-sector bureaucrats often answer only to stockholders—whose concern for patient care extends only as far as it correlates with the bottom line.



Still, the industry's predictions of gloom have the ring of truth. In the old fee-for-service system, when doctors administered whatever treatments they wanted and insurers paid whatever the doctors asked, costs were out of control. Now physicians must ask permission before ordering up tests, referring patients to specialists, and extending hospital stays—all of which helps explain why health care inflation, well into double digits by the late 1980s, has slowed dramatically. It stands to reason that any attempt to undermine the second-guessing of treatment decisions is bound to push up costs again.

Just how much, of course, is unclear. Citing a study by the accounting firm of Muse and Associates, reformers say Norwood's bill would increase premiums by, at most, 2.6 percent; their opponents, pulling out a study they commissioned from Milliman and Robertson, say the increase could top 22 percent. Even some insurance lobbyists admit the upper figure is absurdly high. Among other things, some insurers, particularly the big nonprofit carriers like Kaiser Permanente in California, already offer consumer safeguards. Mandating such protections probably would have less effect on them—if anything, it would put them on a more even footing with their for-profit competition.

But consider this, too. Kaiser just posted record losses; a premium hike is likely soon. While this reflects an industry-wide trend (many managed-care companies are losing money these days), it's not inconceivable that mandated quality standards might drive up premiums by an additional five or even ten percent for the entire industry.

That would be unfortunate, if not quite catastrophic, and the insurers are right to point out other flaws in the Norwood bill—like the fact that it would make the trial lawyers happy, an admittedly lamentable side effect. But, for those of us who believe medical care is not just another commodity—those of us who would like to prevent bean counters from putting profits before the interests of patients like Florence Corcoran—what other recourse is there? When employers negotiate insurance packages, their main concern is price; they get little input from employees. The only way to guarantee quality is by having government set enforceable standards for patient care.

In a sense, by complaining so loudly about the flaws of Norwood's and other proposed incremental measures, the insurance industry unwittingly makes the case for what it would detest even more: comprehensive reform. After all, trade-offs among cost, quality, and access are inevitable. In a nonuniversal, employer-based system like the one we have today, those trade-offs produce a ludicrous cycle, in which employers look for cheap insurance, HMOs meet that demand by skimping on care, lawmakers pass regulations that try to undo the skimping, and higher prices force employers to pass more costs along to employees. It would be far better to sever the link between employment and insurance, make health care a birthright, and let the public decide—through Congress or some other intermediary—how to balance cost, access, and quality. (I'd opt for a relatively generous Canadian-style system financed with progressive taxes, but that's another story.)

Of course, when President Clinton took a stab at creating a similar system four years ago, insurers and business conspired to defeat him. So let them squirm. And, if they decide it is not profitable to underwrite health care at a level of quality most patients consider reasonable, then they can get out of the business altogether. We might all be better off.

JONATHAN COHN

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FIXING HEALTH CARE ISN'T EXACTLY BRAIN SURGERY. (IF ONLY IT WERE THAT EASY.)

About the only aspect of the health care debate any two people might agree on is that the system needs work. We'd like to weigh in with a few ideas of our own since we're actually in the position to do something about it. ▪ First off, the paramount focus of health care must be quality. Which is why we're working to enable a level of health care never available under the old fee-for-service system. ▪ We can't do it alone. So we're partnering with the medical profession to make the system better. We've pioneered and allocated $15 million to fund the Academic Medicine and Managed Care Forum. An ongoing gathering of our experts, and those from more than 30 leading universities and teaching hospitals. Including Johns Hopkins, Yale, Emory, Baylor, University of Pennsylvania and Stanford. Together, we're seeking new ways to help get patients the health care they need. ▪ Already, we send timely reminders that encourage members to see their doctors for immunizations to prevent illness and screenings that diagnose disease early enough to do something about it. One result has been a significant reduction in late-stage breast cancer. ▪ To better manage chronic diseases, we've created outreach efforts that have reduced asthma emergencies 60%, promoted eyesight-saving laser therapy for diabetics, and improved the quality of life for people with congestive heart failure. ▪ There's more work to be done. And we'll do more than our share of it. Because no matter how complex, it has never been our policy to turn our back on a problem. Whether it's that of a patient, or of an entire health care system.

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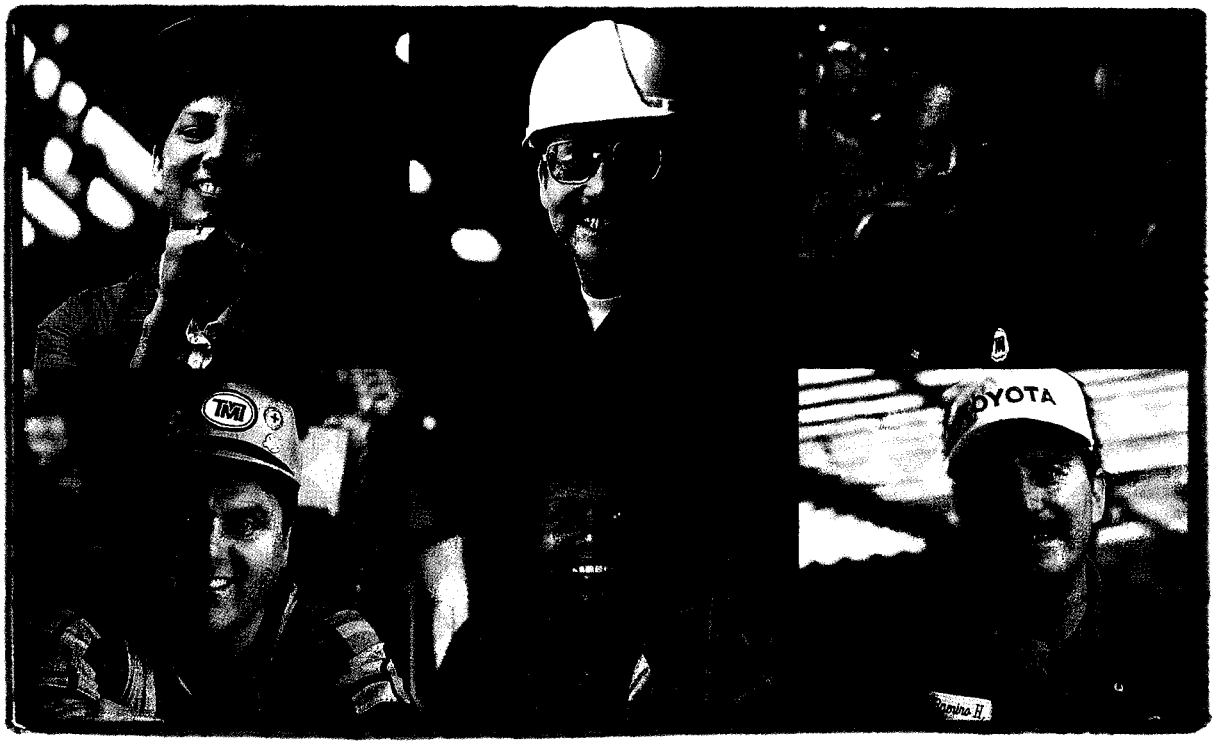

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

MARCH 16, 1998

SADDAM WINS

There was champagne in Turtle Bay and there was champagne in Foggy Bottom; but it was in Baghdad, where a new national holiday called the "Day of the Flag" was established to commemorate what Tariq Aziz astutely described as "a great victory," that the libations to success should have been poured. The American campaign against Saddam Hussein has concluded in perhaps the greatest debacle for American foreign policy since the end of the cold war. President Clinton is praising the outcome of Kofi Annan's mission to Iraq as "diplomacy backed by strength and resolve," as if this is what the masterminds in his government intended all along; but in truth American policy toward Iraq in recent weeks has been a spectacle of incoherence and incompetence, of dovishness masquerading as hawkishness, of improvisation driven by polls and protesters, of a strategy divided between its words and its deeds, between the ends that it proposed and the means that it proposed—which is to say, of no strategy, except the hollow enterprise of "crisis resolution." A comedy of errors, a comedy of terrors, and really no comedy at all.

For the "Memorandum of Understanding between the United Nations and the Republic of Iraq" is air, seven points of air. Consider its first point. "The Government of Iraq further reiterates its undertaking to cooperate fully with the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Commission (IAEA)." Further, indeed. This reiteration is necessary because that same government of Iraq did not feel bound by its previous reiterations of that same undertaking. Similarly, "The Government of Iraq reconfirms its acceptance of all relevant resolutions of the Security Council," those being the resolutions of 1991. The difficulty with this is fundamental. It is that agreement is premised on the possibility of trust, and in this instance no such possibility exists. A sentence beginning with the words "Saddam Hussein agrees" is like a sentence beginning with the words "John Gotti agrees": the rest of the sentence doesn't matter, since it has already been established that we are speaking of a chimera.

In this respect, Kofi Annan's pronouncements about Saddam Hussein were especially bizarre. "We have to remember," he told reporters after briefing the Security Council, "that in the years that the U.N. has been present in Baghdad, many agreements have been signed, but none have been negotiated and approved with Saddam Hussein. And this one was negotiated with the president himself, and the leadership has got the message that he wants cooperation, he wants it done." The leadership? Saddam Hussein *is* the leadership. Or is the secretary-general suggesting that he has brokered a consensus in Iraqi politics, and finally brought the checks and balances of the Iraqi system into alignment? "The Iraqi leadership," he went on, showed "courage, wisdom, flexibility." Saddam "really wanted to do the right thing." Very poignant. "I think I can do business" with him. In fact, Saddam never even raised his voice. Well, let's have him to Aspen!

And consider the memorandum's third point. "The Government of Iraq undertakes to accord to UNSCOM and IAEA immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access in conformity with the resolutions referred to in paragraph 1." This is the provision that provoked the cheer in Turtle Bay and Foggy Bottom. Of course, it is nothing but what UNSCOM has been promised before. (Except that the inspection of the eight "presidential sites" is not at all unrestricted, but subject to "specific detailed procedures which will be developed given the special nature of the presidential sites.") Moreover, "in the performance of its mandate under the Security Council resolutions, UNSCOM undertakes to respect the legitimate concerns of Iraq relating to national security, sovereignty, and dignity." Such fine words.

But they are a corruption of language. Legitimacy and the regime of Saddam Hussein: Would the secretary-general and the secretary of state like to explain their understanding of that indelicate subject? So let us be clear. UNSCOM is not a violation of the national security of Iraq. (That security is threatened only when UNSCOM is impeded by the government of Iraq.) But UNSCOM is indeed a violation of the sovereignty of Iraq, insofar as the sovereignty of Iraq provides cover for its government to develop genocidal weapons and the ability to rain them (again) on innocents. Saddam can restore the sovereignty of his state, and its prosperity, quite easily. He has merely to surrender his anthrax. As for the "dignity" of Saddam and his state, it is undignified even to entertain the notion.

It is in the fourth point of the memorandum that the bargain is struck. It is there that UNSCOM is subordinated

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to a new structure of supervision called the "Special Group." It "shall comprise senior diplomats appointed by the Secretary General and experts drawn from UNSCOM and IAEA. The Group shall be headed by a Commissioner appointed by the Secretary General." Why is this new entity necessary? What is troublesome about the UNSCOM teams as they are presently constituted? Their indifference to the wishes of the Iraqi government, obviously. The "Special Group" is really a way of introducing Iraqi influence into the process of inspection, in the persons of "senior diplomats" from France or Russia or China or other countries soft on Saddam. It is a politicization of the search for the truth. Congratulations!

But it would be unfair to stick only Kofi Annan with this sellout. It has the blessing of Bill Clinton and, worse, the sponsorship of Madeleine Albright. This is the same Madeleine Albright who, only a few days before in Nashville, explaining why the United States must resort to the use of force in Iraq, exclaimed that "I don't think the world has seen in a long time, except maybe Hitler, someone as evil as Saddam Hussein. If the world had been firmer with Hitler earlier, then chances are we might not have had to send Americans to Europe in the Second World War." But here she is, defying what her own history has taught her, and conciliating this almost unprecedentedly evil man.

This is an insult to the intelligence of Americans, and it confirms the impression produced by all the president's national security advisers, at the fiasco at Ohio State and at their other appearances, that they have been animated throughout this mess not by principles but by talking points, and by an increasing discomfort with their own bombs. Perhaps Madeleine Albright and Sandy Berger believe that there was a miracle at the brunch in Baghdad, that Annan persuaded Saddam to be no longer such a nasty man, and to see that it is a terrible, terrible thing to thrill to weapons of mass destruction. Al Gore and William Cohen appear to be arguing against such fantasies. As for the dispositions of Bill Clinton, recall the fateful words of the president-elect of January 14, 1993: "I always tell everybody, 'I'm a Baptist, I believe in deathbed conversions.' If he [Saddam] wants a different relationship with the United States and the United Nations, all he has to do is change his behavior." (And then, in the same breath, Clinton criticized his predecessor's policy on the inspection of Iraq: "It's one of these deals where the Bush administration, in an attempt to be somewhat reasonable, gave him such a cushion about who gets to look in the buildings, and none of this seemed to have any effect.")

The success of "crisis resolution" depends upon a proper definition of the crisis at hand. And the crisis at hand, properly defined, is not Saddam's weapons of mass destruction. It is Saddam himself. For weapons of mass destruction are not primarily a legal problem and a technical problem. They are primarily a political problem and a strategic problem. They threaten states and societies not simply because they exist, but because they exist in the possession of persons and powers who are prepared to use them. The weapons of mass destruction are in Iraq because Saddam Hussein is in Iraq. It really is that simple. For this reason, the Annan–Albright solution is no solution at all.

So a blessing on UNSCOM and its cowboys. They have done splendid work, and the more they work, the better. But it is a matter of time before Saddam shatters this latest initialed illusion, and refuses some blunt and undaunted inspector access to a cranny of his property in which vials and canisters may be stashed. Indeed, the Clinton administration does not seem to grasp that the stimulation of crisis is itself an instrument of policy for Saddam. Every few months he yanks the West's chain, and enhances his legend in the Arab world, and allows Primakov and Chirac to gain a little more ground in their agitation to lift the sanctions and to restore the flow of trade. Every few months he tests our will, every few months we fail the test.

If Saddam is Hitler, then this agreement is Munich. And if Saddam is not Hitler, then why the frenzy? Of course Saddam is not Hitler, and this agreement is not Munich. But he is monster enough, and this agreement is monstrous enough. The Annan–Albright accomplishment may allow the discovery and the destruction of a bit more of Saddam's arsenal; but by codifying the destruction of his arsenal as the objective of American policy, it is a petty accomplishment. For the objective of American policy must be the destruction of the regime in Baghdad. This objective will almost certainly require the use of covert and overt force. To be sure, it is not an objective that can be accomplished this week. (It might have been accomplished this week, if the Clinton administration had not abandoned the Iraqi opposition to its fate in 1996.) But who says that Saddam is strong at home? There is growing evidence of the dictator's political weakness. It is only abroad, it seems, that he finds respect. •

NOTEBOOK

SID SWIPED: What was Ken Starr thinking when he decided to issue a subpoena to White House propagandist (and erstwhile TNR writer) Sidney Blumenthal? Blumenthal, you'll recall, is the man so obsessed about the "vast right-wing conspiracy" purportedly behind the Monica Lewinsky scandal that he is known around the West Wing as "grassy knoll," or "G.K." for short. While still on the staff of *The New Yorker* a few years ago, he execrably advised his confidant Hillary Rodham Clinton to compile a critical dossier on a fellow journalist, *Washington Post* Whitewater reporter Susan Schmidt. Lately, he has been defending President Clinton by dishing out rumors about the misfeasances of Starr's staff to any reporter within shouting distance. Yet perhaps the only thing more distasteful than the taxpayer-financed machinations of Blumenthal is Starr's clumsy effort to crush him. Starr's subpoena of Blumenthal, which included a

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demand that Blumenthal tell the grand jury about all of his contacts with members of the press, was a gross abuse of legal process, a possible infringement on Blumenthal's constitutional right to complain about the conduct of other public officials, and a possible violation of the freedom of the press as well. Starr's legal justification for the subpoena—namely, that Blumenthal's rumor campaign was designed to "intimidate" prosecutors and thereby might amount to obstruction of justice—is, as the lawyers say, utterly preposterous. Turning Sid Blumenthal into a (legitimate!) martyr to the First Amendment is a real achievement for the Starr investigation, an error in judgment even goofier than Starr's on-again, off-again resignation to pursue a job at Pepperdine University, or his blithe and ongoing representation of private clients including major tobacco firms. There may be an upside, though: Starr's blunder could finally convince Blumenthal that the right-wing conspiracy isn't really omnipotent. After all, with enemies like this, who needs an enemies list?

PROLETARIAT CHIC: Che Guevara was appropriated to peddle Swatch watches, skis, and other goods, so perhaps it was only a matter of time before someone appropriated Madison Avenue marketing techniques to sell Marxism itself. The left-wing publisher Verso now plans to mark the one-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of *The Communist Manifesto* with an "up-market edition" of the revolutionary tome, targeted not at the proletariat, but at "up-scale shoppers of fashion and furniture stores," says publisher Colin Robinson. Plans are in the works to feature the stylish red-and-black, cloth-bound edition at Barneys as well as the checkout counters of Borders and Barnes & Noble beginning on May Day, natch. Robinson admits the campaign is tongue-in-cheek but swears that the goal is to encourage the widest possible readership of the *Manifesto*, especially among those he considers "quite well off but a little uncomfortable with capitalism." So let the ruling class tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their credit cards. Shoppers of the world, unite!

IN MEMORY: It is with sadness that we mourn the passing of journalist Sandy Hume, who died last weekend at the age of 28. To say he was on the brink of an impressive career does a disservice to his past accomplishments. Most memorably, as a reporter for *The Hill* newspaper, Sandy broke last year's biggest congressional story—the plot to unseat House Speaker Newt Gingrich. (His lone contribution to THE NEW REPUBLIC, "Déjà Coup II," was a follow-up article last fall that broke news of more such scheming.) It is a testament to his integrity and abilities that the members of Congress whom Sandy covered regularly, including Gingrich, were among those offering tributes upon his passing. Sandy's pugnacious reporting will be missed by the public; his generous spirit will be missed by his friends. •

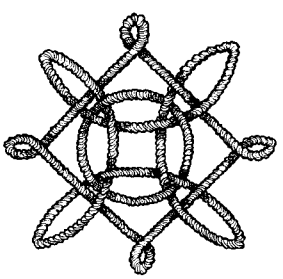
THE HARD QUESTIONS

GETTING PERSONAL

By Michael Walzer

Even in the '60s, I was uneasy with the slogan "the personal is political." There was a sense in which it was important and true. It suggested that the inequalities of everyday life, above all, the gender inequalities, should not be understood as "merely" private, for that is the false understanding that entrenches and perpetuates them. In fact, they are socially patterned; they are often recognized in the law, reinforced by bureaucratic procedures; and therefore in need of political opposition and reform.

But the slogan was also taken to mean that the everyday behavior of men and women in their private lives is closely connected to, or at least indicative of, their likely behavior in public life. And that proposition is almost certainly false. It would be nice if it were true: if marital faithfulness, parental concern, true friendship, fidelity to campaign promises, loyalty to the cause, compassion, political courage, moral vision, and moral authority all went together, so that if candidate X, say, is faithful to his friends and relatives, we could be sure that he will be faithful to the party program; if he is faithful to the program, his friends and relatives have nothing to worry about. Conservative writers often use the word "character" to describe what supposedly underlies the qualities on my list. Find men and women with character, and you can count on them, in public and private, good times and bad; they will always act in the morally right way. Sometimes the argument goes one step further: they won't only be good, they will also be good at all the things that they need to do.



Unfortunately, these claims aren't true, and we all know that they aren't true. We all know, or we have heard about, people who represent every possible combination of good and bad qualities—mass murderers who are loving husbands and fathers; thieves and philanderers who are decent, competent, even inspiring political leaders. There is no formula for sorting all this out. Democratic citizens use their common sense, as they seem to have been doing, to the great surprise of all the journalists and professors who supposedly understand public opinion in the current White House soap opera.

Still, it is worth thinking about what a *political morality*

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might look like. What are the standards by which we should measure our leaders and representatives? I have a short list, designed to suggest the counter-slogan: the political isn't personal. Maybe the list is too short. But it seems to me that most of what we ought to want, and deserve to have, in our public officials is encompassed by three values:

Constitutional faith. When they come into office, political leaders take an oath to the Constitution, and thereby accept a set of obligations, which are probably best stated in negative terms: no tampering with the democratic process; no effort to undermine the separation of powers; no denial of the guaranteed rights of citizens, including, most importantly, the right of opposition. This is the realm where violations of trust are most dangerous, and I am inclined to think that the independent counsel law ought to be focused here. Only when there is serious evidence of constitutional crimes is there sufficient reason for a special prosecutor, who is set radically free from any pressure that could be brought to bear by the people who may have committed the crimes. But crimes of passion, enrichment, and even violence (unless the violence is directed at political enemies) should probably be handled by the normal justice system. If normal justice can't do the job, it should be strengthened, not displaced.

Democratic commitment. Public officials ought to be committed all the time to all the citizens. They have to think about the common good even when they are acting in inevitably particularist ways. When they do cost-benefit analysis, they have to count everyone's costs and benefits, without regard to class, race, or religion. Of course, even the narrowest partisanship isn't usually a matter for criminal investigation. Political leaders who serve the rich and the powerful, for example, have only sometimes been paid for their services. But they are morally culpable even when the service is selfless, for they ought to address themselves to the needs of the poor and the weak. This requirement has to be politically enforced, say, through elections, despite the fact that political enforcement is always partial and belated. I confess that I might enjoy the spectacle of a special prosecutor collecting the private papers, or taping the phone conversations, of political leaders who are suspected of never thinking about fellow citizens in trouble. But that kind of righteous zeal leads only to tyranny. (It wouldn't be so bad, though, if energetic journalists pursued such matters, without legal powers or invasive technology.)

Trustworthiness. I mean here to describe (only!) political honesty: good-faith relationships with constituents, party members, colleagues, and subordinates in the government itself. It is true that in democratic political campaigns the promises of candidates are always discounted; we don't in fact expect exactly what we are told to expect. But we ought to insist on a general programmatic commitment, and, when officeholders break that commitment, we ought to require a public accounting. Here again, there is no room for litigation. Political promises are not contracts, and they can only be enforced politically.

This is even more obviously true with regard to the promises exchanged among politicians when they agree to support a particular piece of legislation or to join some policy coalition. Trust is crucial in these kinds of relationships. It would not be a good thing if all politicians were wired with hidden microphones while negotiating with their colleagues. When trust breaks down, we all pay a price, because leaders who can't be trusted will not be able to do things that ought to be done: to take necessary risks or to ask for sacrifices from their own supporters or from the nation as a whole. Trust is a kind of political capital that has to be accumulated over long periods of time, in preparation for those critical moments when it must be suddenly spent.

By limiting the list this way, excluding the private lives of political leaders, I don't mean to deny that common decency and personal integrity figure importantly in public life. But I don't know exactly how they figure, and I am not eager to speculate. A political leader who is morally reckless at home may or may not be reckless in office. He may, in fact, be excessively circumspect and cautious. The contrast between democracy and monarchy is instructive here: the private recklessness of kings and queens threatens the legitimacy of the dynasty and the peacefulness of the succession. Not so for us. We can and should judge politicians by what they do politically. We need to know as much as we can about their vision for the country and about their competence in achieving that vision and about their readiness to restrain their efforts within the limits of a constitutional democracy. For myself, I don't think that I want to know anything more. •

Saddam's sickening arsenal.

TOXIC SHOCK

By Franklin Foer

On one side of a hermetic glass wall in an underground chamber sit Iraqi scientists. On the other side, an Iranian prisoner of war is strapped to a bed by his arms and legs, immobilized. One of the scientists turns a valve, and a hose attached to the ceiling showers the POW with anthrax. The scientists watch the Iranian as he quickly develops a high fever and hacking cough. A day later, they observe him vomiting and breathing with difficulty. His muscles convulse. Within 36 hours, the prisoner dies. The findings from the experiment—conducted sometime

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What will bombing Iraq accomplish?

"Using force could have negative consequences—and it would probably not solve our major problem: destroying nuclear, biological and chemical weapons."

— General Charles A. Horner (ret.)
Commander, American-led forces
Operation Desert Storm
The New York Times
Feb. 7, 1998

☑ ***Eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction?***

It didn't work with a much bigger force in 1991 and it won't work now.

☑ ***Open Iraq to United Nations weapons inspectors?***

The inspection teams have been effective. But chemical and biological weapons are easy to make and easy to hide. And bombing may cause Iraq to bar U.N. inspectors altogether.

☑ ***Remove Saddam Hussein from power?***

Far from weakening his grip, bombing may strengthen it, transforming a neighborhood bully into a global martyr. America's support in the Arab world will shrink and terrorist attacks will grow. The deaths of Iraqi civilians will not hurt Saddam Hussein. Neither will American military casualties.

☑ ***Establish the primacy of law?***

The U.N. Security Council has not endorsed military action. The Gulf War coalition has eroded. Few nations agree with us. Yet, we are assuming the role of our world policeman, preempting and undermining U.N. authority.

Economic sanctions have succeeded in weakening Iraq. If they are strictly enforced and coupled with adequate humanitarian assistance, the rule of law will be upheld. Bombing will not solve our problems, only create new ones.

If you oppose bombing Iraq, tell the White House by calling 202-456-1111

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during the late 1980s near a military base 50 miles south of Baghdad—are delivered to Saddam Hussein, who studies them closely and orders more tests on prisoners.

The account of these barbaric experiments comes courtesy of exiled Iraqi dissidents and anonymous Israeli intelligence officers, who leaked the reports to British newspapers. However, U.N. inspectors have had little success, and little help, corroborating these horrors. In 1994, for instance, Iraqi soldiers prevented U.N. inspectors from examining trenches thought to contain the corpses of Iranian POWs used in the experiments. The trenches, Iraq claimed, lay on a sacred ancient burial ground. Most recently, Iraq tried to exempt large tracts of land from U.N. inspection by claiming they comprise "presidential palaces."

Although Iraq has now agreed to open these sites as part of its deal to stave off U.S. air strikes, it's anyone's guess what this means in practice. And, no matter how many palaces U.N. inspectors can enter, their inspections are unlikely to make much of a difference. Over the years, Iraq's weapons program has demonstrated an implacability in the face of allied bombing and U.N. inspections that leads one to suspect the worst. But what is the worst? Just what poisons might Saddam have in his chemistry set? It's impossible to know for sure, but a review of Saddam's chemical- and biological-weapons arsenal before the Gulf war probably provides the best clue.

Saddam's quest for chemical and biological weapons began in earnest after the end of the Iran–Iraq war in 1988. Even though Iraq suffered catastrophic losses and came nowhere near winning a clear-cut victory, the war bolstered Saddam's ambitions. Iraq, he vowed, would become the unquestioned leader of the Arab world, as he filled the void left by the Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser's death 18 years prior. In peace, the Iraqi army not only remained at full strength; it also grew to more than one million men. Iraq poured its resources into the development of chemical and biological weapons. In the months between the cease-fire with Iran and its invasion of Kuwait, Iraq expanded its cache to include 182 warheads filled with an assortment of biological weapons. During the Kuwait invasion, Saddam's forces shipped many of these warheads to air force bases and loaded them onto planes as bombs. They readied others to be launched by ballistic missiles. As best as we can tell, none was ever used.

As a condition of the Gulf war cease-fire, Iraq agreed to destroy this arsenal. And it says it has. But, of the 182 warheads Iraq admitted possessing before the war, it has provided physical evidence of the destruction of only 23. Iraq claims that the rest were destroyed during the war. But there is no evidence to verify this, because Iraqi officials refuse to hand over the paperwork supposedly supporting their contention. And even more warheads could have been produced on the sly since 1991. According to the U.N. inspectors, Iraq has as many as 16 ballistic missiles, which, in the right weather conditions, could fire warheads as far as Tel Aviv.

Just what toxins could these missiles carry? At least some of the surviving warheads probably contain the nerve gas VX. Iraq admitted to producing 260 liters of it in its buildup for the Gulf war. VX is similar to sarin, the agent used by the Aum cult in their 1995 Tokyo subway attack. When as little as ten milligrams of the gas comes in contact with the skin, it is absorbed into the bloodstream. As it circulates, it destroys the enzyme acetylcholinesterase, which is essential to transmitting messages between nerves and muscles. This causes almost immediate tightness in the chest, vomiting, involuntary urination and defecation, constant erections, and unstoppable salivation. Convulsions soon become violent, and respiratory muscles cease contracting, causing death within half an hour, or in just two minutes if inhaled. VX gas could be delivered by missiles with frightening effectiveness. Upon impact, it would create an odorless, invisible cloud that would not dissipate for at least four days. Gas masks are useless against VX. Only individuals who are in sealed rooms or those who immediately inject themselves with an antidote would survive an attack.

Then, of course, there's anthrax—a bacterium that causes a lethal disease normally found in cattle and sheep. In the years leading up to the Gulf war, Saddam cooked up a massive 2,265 gallons of the stuff. Anthrax missiles are hardly benign. If the land where the missile hits were to absorb even some of the anthrax inside, it would be rendered uninhabitable. But, since most of the anthrax spores would be consumed in the explosion and most of what's left would have aggregated into nonlethal clumps while stored in the missile's metal casing, anthrax is less suitable than VX gas for missile delivery. Rather, the real danger posed by anthrax is its potential effectiveness in a terrorist attack. For instance, a canister of anthrax could be placed on subway tracks where it could burst open as a train rolled over it. As the train sped past, it would whip the anthrax into a cloud of deadly particles that would then spread throughout the subway system. Because anthrax is odorless and invisible, there would be no immediate sign of the attack. But, within hours, people who ingested the bacteria would begin experiencing flulike symptoms. By the time they sought treatment, the anthrax would have inflicted irreversible, fatal damage. Since bodies wouldn't pile up in the subway station, it would take investigators days to trace the cause of the deaths. Ultimately, contamination could shut down the targeted subway system for decades.

Apart from developing notorious toxins like anthrax and VX gas, Iraq has also veered into more experimental territory. For instance, Iraq is the only nation to realize the military application of aflatoxin, a carcinogenic mold that grows on dates and corn. In the lab, aflatoxin destroys the immune systems of rats. In humans, exposure to aflatoxin correlates with liver cancer. Apart from that, little is known. But in 1988 Iraq mixed aflatoxin with riot gases and loaded the mixture onto shells, which it launched against rebellious Kurdish villages. The solution purportedly caused asphyxiation and killed a large percentage of the target population. But, because it was delivered in large quantities over short distances, it was impossible to discern how much

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damage aflatoxin would do in a ballistic-missile attack.

And Iraq may possess other weapons. Prior to the Gulf war, Saddam's most plentiful poison was botulinum toxin, which is lethal when ingested. To be sure, scientists have doubts about how it could be effectively delivered: it would not survive inside a missile, is filtered out by the lungs when inhaled, and would probably be wiped out by decontamination processes if released into the water supply. Nonetheless, Saddam must have seen fit to produce 3,117 gallons of the stuff for some reason. There are also Israeli intelligence reports that Iraq experimented with smallpox and considered making sarin. Finally, before the Gulf war, Iraq's research was about to yield unprecedented advances in delivery systems. According to one ex-U.N. inspector, Iraqi scientists had nearly developed a remote-control plane that they could use to sprinkle anthrax over cities—a sort of crop duster of doom. Our knowledge of such efforts may not tell us exactly what Saddam is doing now, but it certainly provides ample cause for concern. After all, if Saddam gases his own citizens and orders Mengele-style human experiments, why would he scruple about doing even worse?

FRANKLIN FOER is on the staff of *Slate*.

OHIO POSTCARD

ANTI-WAR ZONE

By David Grann

When Michael Leutbecker and his friends stood before the CNN cameras at the Ohio State town meeting last week and chanted, "One, two, three, four, we don't want your racist war," they sent a scary image around the world: America was deeply divided over the prospect of bombing Iraq.

Yet up close the protesters are unsettling for different reasons. On Leutbecker's wrists are black leather bondage bracelets, and around his neck is a thick metal choker. "This wasn't a one-time deal," the 19-year-old freshman from Antioch College insists. "We're not going to stop." His buddies—one with five purple spikes of hair jutting up from his head—nod in agreement. Even as a temporary truce emerges between the U.S. and Iraq, the members of the Yellow Springs, Ohio, chapter of the Anti-Racist Action organization, as well as a coalition of students at Antioch College, are plotting their next act of subversion: a massive march in New York City next weekend. "We'll go no matter what happens with Saddam," says the kid with the spikes. In the background, there is the pulse of punk music: "Fuck Americanism. Fuck Nationalism. Fuck Militarism."

"It's all about racism," Leutbecker explains, adding his own ism. "You don't see us threatening to bomb the white Europeans."

"What about World War II?" I ask. "I thought we let 'em have it pretty good."

There is suddenly a hush in the room, as if for the first time my presence has dawned on them. Leutbecker pushes his face up close to mine. "Which side are you on, anyway?"

I have come to Ohio to experience a piece of America that purportedly vanished with the '60s. Though the impression from the town meeting with Clinton's national security team was of farmers spontaneously rising up against any war effort, some of the most vocal protesters came from Antioch College and the small hippie town of Yellow Springs. The school has a long history of radicalism: more recently, in 1994, a group of students calling itself the Revolutionary Action Committee took over the administration building; a year later, 75 students clashed with police during a demonstration against federal cuts in financial aid; and, several months ago, police raided a professor's home and found 15 marijuana plants.

It is, by all outward appearances, the last refuge of a lost generation—anarchy in the heartland. Except that, when I actually call the protesters at their dorms, none of them will speak to me unless I get permission from their supervisors. "You can't just come here," says Sarah Friedman, a peace-studies major who had attended the town-hall meeting. "You have to go through official processes to respect our school and our rights."

"Rights? I just want to talk."

"I'm sorry. Those are the rules."

A few hours later, a higher official—a cheerful woman from the school's public-relations department—calls and says I can come, but she will need 24 hours to "alert" the campus of my arrival.

"Oh, one more thing," she adds, before hanging up. "Someone will have to accompany you at all times."

Getting into Antioch, it turns out, is a lot like getting into Iraq. There are media passports and bumper stickers that serve as ideological reminders of an alternative faith: "Boycott veal!"; "Stop factory farming!"; "Sexism is a social disease"; "While we progress in technology, we lack humanity"; "Free Leonard Peltier!" When I arrive on Saturday morning, I plan, as ordered, to go directly to security and sign in. But on my way I bump into the kid with the five spikes while he is wiping some fresh purple hair dye from his hands. He says we can wait for my escort while we eat lunch at the cafeteria.

The doors of the student center are blanketed with more urgent messages: "Students for a Free Tibet: Learn the truth about the ongoing genocide of the Tibetan people, the environmental destruction in the Tibetan Plateau," and, of course, "how to make yak cheese." Amid all these causes, the sign about the Persian Gulf seems almost lost: "Want to go to New York to protest the U.S. for bombing Iraq?"

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As we wait in line, the kid with spiked hair tells me he is a vegan. "I don't eat anything with any animal products," he says. "It's an ethical choice and a political choice." He scrutinizes the steaming trays of food, as if there were toxins rising from them. "I can't eat chicken or butter or milk or chocolate or. . . ." I help myself to a large slice of shepherd's pie and head for a table.

Despite the padlock dangling from a chain around his neck, this kid seems like a gentle missionary. "My politics are part of my life and always will be," he says. Just as I feel I am about to be let into the secrets of this cloistered world, my minder arrives in a flush of anger. "What are you doing?" she cries.

It seems I have violated a provision of the Antioch school code, according to the college's "Survival Handbook": "No media representatives shall be allowed to do interviews, photographs, or filming in the residence halls, common rooms, or bathrooms unless they are escorted." Hauled into security, I am booked and processed and handed a big white sign which I'm supposed to wear prominently to warn people of my presence.

Antioch, it turns out, is less a place of anarchy than of order. There are rules for the media, for eating, for identifying each other, even, famously, for sex. In 1993, the school implemented its now notorious "sexual offense policy." According to the guidelines, which the students themselves promulgated, consent must be obtained verbally before there is any sexual contact: "If the level of sexual intimacy increases during an interaction (i.e, if two people move from kissing while fully clothed—which is one level—to undressing for direct physical contact, which is another level), the people involved need to express their clear verbal consent before moving to that new level." There is, it seems, in every human connection a potential for danger, for violence, for annihilation. "Consent, even verbal consent, may not be valid," declares the "Survival Handbook." Free love has turned into love of order. When I ask my minder about the rules, she glares: "Why do you need to know about that? You're doing a story on the protest."

That afternoon, I am banned from a strategy meeting on the upcoming New York protest. Even when I assure the lead organizer that I won't take notes, I am told I am not welcome: "You have to have our consent."

"Consent? Who am I going to violate?"

"Me!"

With nothing to report on, I wander the campus with my minder, a petite student with vaguely Hasidic tendrils of black hair hanging over her ears. We walk by the Womyn's Center, the Multicultural Center, the Wellness Center. The campus is divided into several zones: queer zones, womyn zones, quiet zones, smoking-tolerance zones. These are like bunkers where people can find refuge from the enemy. Each zone is sacrosanct: a heterosexual, for example, is not supposed to enter the queer zone, though presumably if you are a queer quiet womyn who smokes you can go in all four. Needless to say, I am not welcome in any zones, except the health zone, where I am given a handful of free condoms, rubber gloves, and lubricants. Safe sex, my minder informs me, is a rule, too.

The next day I do what I used to do when reporting in Communist countries: ditch the secret police. But just as I get past the security office, a student stops me suspiciously and asks, "Aren't you the guy from the *National Review*?"

Back at the hotel, I lie down, defeated. I consider calling my minder but instead call the Teleke family, whose son, Joshua, was the only demonstrator arrested at the town-hall meeting. His brother, Shan, answers the phone expectantly; my minder has already called and alerted him that I might try to make contact. Joshua, he informs me, has gotten out of jail and headed back to Earlham College. Desperate for any material, I ask Shan to meet me in town for lunch at Carol's Kitchen.

When I get there, to my surprise, the whole Teleke family is waiting for me: Joshua's brother, Shan, a wiry 15-year-old with a long, blond ponytail; his 45-year-old mother, Kari; his 73-year-old grandmother Hazel; and his 74-year-old grandfather, a retired Antioch professor of botany named Walt. "We're so proud of Josh," says Mom Kari. "Now I have something to brag about," adds Hazel, who has been incarcerated for civil disobedience four times. It turns out they are longtime Quakers, driven as much by faith as by fear. "Nonviolence goes beyond not just being physical," says Shan. "It's a way of life."

Indeed, not just for the Telekes. Later that afternoon I learn from a student with a pierced lip that the Anti-Racist Action League is meeting at six o'clock. But he doesn't know where, and my minder of the day won't tell me. "You can't go anyway," he says.

"Why not? It's a public meeting."

"Because it's closed to the media."

Eventually, I coax out of him the name of a coffee shop. I arrive to find Michael Leutbecker and his friends smoking cigarettes and drinking coffee. By 6:20, the room is filled with young, conspicuously white people and a blue cloud of smoke. No one has yet removed me, and I am sure I am finally free. Kari and Walt come in, asking about an attorney for Joshua, as talk turns to possible lawsuits over police brutality.

I quietly take it all in until, just as the meeting is called to order, a man with a thick black beard points to me and says, "So you must be the reporter!" A minute later, I am standing on the sidewalk.

Before I return to Washington, I spend an hour sitting with my original minder outside the student center, chatting. As a plane roars overhead from Wright–Patterson Air Force Base, she draws her knees to her chest. "You can always hear them," she says. I ask her what she is most worried about, and she thinks for a second and then says, "There are so many things." The KKK, PCBs, and deforestation; racism, homophobia, and political prisoners. As she rattles off each threat, there is a sudden tenderness in her voice, and I realize, for the first time, that I am just another invading force. Even in the safe zones of Antioch, there is no safety—just dread—an emotion that, in its own subtle way, has done as much damage to these students as the "racist" war they fear. •

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Paula Jones and the end of privacy.

I PRY

By Jeffrey Rosen

At every stage in her ridiculous lawsuit against Bill Clinton, Paula Jones has deftly adjusted her allegations to take advantage of the peculiarities of sexual harassment law itself. When she filed her complaint in 1994, for example, Jones claimed unconvincingly that her career had suffered because she spurned Clinton's alleged advance, although she hadn't mentioned anything about retaliation in her initial interviews or press conference. Then, last week, Jones changed her story yet again. In parts of her October deposition that Clinton's lawyers made public on February 17, Jones alleged for the first time that Clinton "was trying to touch my pelvic area.... [I]f I hadn't stopped him, he would have." In her initial complaint, she had claimed less melodramatically that Clinton "put his hand on Plaintiff's leg and started sliding it toward the hem of Plaintiff's culottes."

What can explain Jones's latest embellishment? Part of the answer may have to do with her lawyers' attempt to take advantage of an amendment to the Federal Rules of Evidence, adopted by Congress as part of the Violence Against Women Act and signed by President Clinton in 1994. A new rule of evidence, Rule 415, says that, in civil cases involving allegations of "sexual assault," evidence of the accused "party's commission of another offense or offenses of sexual assault ... is admissible." With the claim that Clinton tried to touch Jones's genitals, Jones's lawyers are clearly trying to satisfy the federal definition of attempted sexual assault, which includes attempted "contact, without consent, between any part of the defendant's body ... and the genitals ... of another person." John Whitehead, the president of the Rutherford Institute, which is funding Jones's suit, floated the new strategy in *The New York Times* on February 18. "This is not just some benign employer making a minor sexual advance," said Whitehead. "It's a sexual assault by someone we allege to be a sexual predator."

By alleging that Clinton didn't simply harass Jones, but tried to sexually assault her as well, Jones's lawyers are laying the groundwork for an argument that the judge in the case, Susan Webber Wright, violated Rule 415 when she excluded evidence of Clinton's alleged indiscretions with Monica Lewinsky. If the jury ultimately rejects Jones's claim that she suffered from sex discrimination in the workplace (as any sane jury should), her lawyers seem prepared to brandish Rule 415 as the main weapon in their effort to have the verdict set aside on appeal.

Jones's lawyers also tipped their hand on February 5 in their response to Clinton's motion for an expedited trial. Calling Judge Wright's decision to exclude evidence of the Lewinsky affair an "error," Jones's lawyers said they had "lost extremely valuable and material evidence concerning the Monica Lewinsky-Linda Tripp-Defendant Clinton-Vernon Jordan situation directly relevant to: Defendant Clinton's ... potential sexual assaults *absolutely admissible* under Federal Rules of Evidence 413 and 415" (my italics). If Jones ultimately loses her case, her lawyers threatened, she would move "to set aside the judgment and [ask] for a new trial because of newly discovered evidence and the fraud, misrepresentation, and other misconduct of Defendant Clinton ... in relation to the Monica evidence."

In language that reads like a parody of *The American Spectator*, Jones's lawyers concluded on the following note: "If the allegations inherent in the Monica evidence are true, then Defendant Clinton: sexually assaulted, sexually harassed, and/or committed oral sex with a 21-year-old White House intern in or about the Oval Office and rewarded her with two paying federal jobs.... Defendant Clinton and his minions should not be permitted to cloak these asserted nefarious crimes in the mantle of the 'office of the president' in their desperate attempt to avoid personal, individual liability."

Aside from the implausible claim that Clinton sexually assaulted Monica Lewinsky, there's just one problem with Jones's creative argument that Judge Wright may have committed reversible error under the new federal rules by excluding evidence of the Lewinsky affair: Rule 415 doesn't apply in the Paula Jones case because the amendments to the Federal Rules of Evidence apply only to "proceedings commenced on or after" the day the new federal rules went into effect. The Violence Against Women Act was adopted on September 13, 1994, and the new rules of evidence were then sent to the Judicial Conference, an organization of federal judges, which objected strenuously that the new rules "would permit the introduction of unreliable but highly prejudicial evidence and would complicate trials by causing minitrials of other alleged wrongs." Congress, alas, ignored the judges' prescient warnings, and the new rules took effect on July 1, 1994. Because Paula Jones filed her suit in May 1994, she can't take advantage of the new federal rules after all. Drinks on the house at Skadden, Arps.

Nevertheless, although Jones's lawyers may have miscalculated in their efforts to argue a case of sexual assault, it's worth trying to imagine how the Jones case might have come out under the new, rather than the old, federal rules of evidence. Before the 1970s, the traditional presumption in civil and criminal trials was that "evidence of other crimes, wrongs, or acts is not admissible" to prove the bad character of the accused or of the accuser. The exception to this rule was in rape

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cases, where lawyers were permitted to inquire into the sexual history of the alleged victim in order to cast light on the question of consent.

But the traditional concern for the rights of the accused over those of the accuser has since been turned on its head. In 1980, at the urging of Representative Elizabeth Holtzman, Congress adopted a rape-shield amendment to the rules of evidence, Rule 412, which excludes "evidence offered to prove that any alleged victim engaged in other sexual behavior." The rule was further toughened in the Violence Against Women Act in 1994, and Paula Jones's lawyers are planning to invoke it to prevent Robert Bennett, the president's attorney, from embarrassing her at trial by disclosing lurid details about her past. At the same time, Congress adopted rules 413, 414, and 415, which some commentators have construed to *require* the admission of evidence about other sexual assaults committed by the accused, regardless of whether or not their probative value is outweighed by their prejudicial effect—the traditional test by which judges decide whether or not evidence should be admitted. (Three appellate courts, however, have held that the new rules don't override the traditional relevance test.)

Let's put ourselves in Judge Wright's shoes in the Paula Jones case and try to decide whether or not to allow evidence of the Lewinsky dalliance under the old and new rules of evidence. Under the old rules, Judge Wright should almost certainly decide that the "probative value" of the Monica evidence—that is, its relevance in proving Paula Jones's allegations—is "substantially outweighed by the danger of unfair prejudice, confusion of the issues, or misleading the jury." In other words, the fact that Clinton may have had an entirely consensual affair with a young intern, begun after weeks or months of flirtation, casts very little light on whether or not he was likely to make a pass at Jones minutes after meeting her and then retaliate against her for rejecting his advances.

Imagine that Bill Clinton, like George Bush, was alleged to have had only one or two affairs during the course of a long marriage. Would it be fair to admit evidence of these consensual infidelities in an unrelated sexual harassment suit? The traditional legal answer is that no, it wouldn't be fair. The infidelities would be excluded on the grounds that they are highly embarrassing to Clinton and likely to inflame a jury while telling us almost nothing about Clinton's conduct toward women in the workplace, who may have rebuffed his advances.

Under the new rules, by contrast, Judge Wright would also have a hard time prohibiting Jones's lawyers from asking the prurient and inappropriate question that they posed to Clinton in their latest interrogatories: "Please state the name, address, and telephone number of each and every individual (other than Hillary Rodham Clinton) with whom you had sexual relations when you held any of the following positions: *(a)* Attorney General of the state of Arkansas; *(b)* Governor of the state of Arkansas; *(c)* President of the United States." This leering fishing expedition intrudes on the very core of the president's privacy. But it might have to be allowed, under the new rules, on the theory that some of the sexual contacts have been unwanted, which would convert them into sexual assaults. And, as long as there's evidence of attempted sexual assault, the new rules might require the evidence to be admitted, even if its relevance to the Jones allegations were difficult to discern.

In a recent article in *The Harvard Law Review*, Katharine Baker of the Chicago–Kent Law School argues that amendments to the federal rules of evidence contained in the Violence Against Women Act are, in fact, anti-feminist, because they are based on a false view of rape as a pathological activity, carried out by a small, mentally ill group of repeat offenders, rather than something that even otherwise healthy men may commit once in their lives. Baker thinks the new rules reflect a false view of sexual harassment, too, as something committed by lotharios rather than misogynists. In fact, Baker argues, Clinton's kindness to Gennifer Flowers and Monica Lewinsky, who appear to have reciprocated his advances, casts very little light on his treatment of Paula Jones. "No one thinks Clinton goes around harassing Donna Shalala," says Baker. "He's not someone who can't deal with women in a professional context and has to bring in porno magazines to work."

Despite their best efforts, even Jones's lawyers couldn't find evidence to support their mustache-twirling theory that Clinton rewarded those who succumbed to his advances and punished those who did not. Kathleen Willey seems to have rebuffed Clinton, but that didn't deter him from giving her the help she wanted. In any event, the relevant question under any defensible definition of sexual harassment is whether an employer systematically discriminates against the women he directly supervises in the workplace, not whether he occasionally makes passes at isolated women who are nominally (but not actually) under his control and then retreats with good grace when his gropings are rejected.

Of course, neither President Clinton nor his feminist defenders would have standing to protest the injustices wrought by the Violence Against Women Act. It was Clinton's cool-eyed alliance with the National Organization for Women on the one hand, and Representative Susan Molinari on the other, which led him to sign the Violence Against Women Act in exchange for Republican support on the budget in 1994. But, although Clinton would deserve whatever he gets at the hands of harassment laws he so promiscuously expanded, other citizens deserve the traditional due process guarantees. The new federal rules eliminate procedural protections for accused harassers at the moment those protections are most urgently needed. Now that Congress and the president are beginning to feel the sting of their own illiberal handiwork, perhaps they will reconsider what they have wrought. •

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Why India works.

ORGANIZED CHAOS

By Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph

By the end of February, over half of India's 600 million voters will cast ballots in the country's twelfth national election. How can a land of six major religions, 18 official languages, and 3,500 subcastes be a democracy that works? How has India managed to defy the post-cold war conventional wisdom that multinational states are subject to ethnic violence and civil war?

At the end of the cold war in 1991, multinational states in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia fell apart. Without authoritarian centers to hold them together, they split along ethnic lines. Civil war and ethnic cleansing followed. Many concluded that multinational states, like the multinational empires that preceded them, weren't viable—that the modern nation-state was the inevitable and universal fruit of progressive history and political development.

Like Europe, India is populated by many peoples, each with its own language, history, and culture. Kashmir and Kerala, at opposite ends of the Indian subcontinent, are as different as Sweden and Italy, at opposite ends of the European continent. But, unlike the countries of Europe, which only recently have tried to move beyond the nation-state by sharing sovereignty in a European Union, India has been sharing sovereignty for centuries, in the *subhas* of the Mughal empire, the provinces and princely states of British India, and, today, in the federal states of independent India. India's common state, market, foreign policy, legal system, and currency resemble what the European Union seems to be reaching for.

India's pluralist state is not a panacea for living with difference. Civil wars in the Punjab, Assam, Kashmir, and tribal states in the northeast make that clear. But the existence of domestic violence in India should not blind us to how successful its federalism has been. The roots of this success lie in the decision by India's founders in 1953 and 1960 to reorganize federal states along linguistic lines, recognizing and legitimizing cultural difference. The result refuted predictions that cultural nationalism would lead to balkanization or dictatorship. Today, Indian citizens seem to have no difficulty holding dual identities and loyalties, belonging to Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Rajasthan, *and* India. Other factors contribute to the success of federalism in India. The dominance of the Congress Party has given way to a multiparty system based on regional parties. The move to economic liberalization in 1991 replaced central planning with markets. State chief ministers now go abroad in search of investment funds and trade opportunities. State governments compete for Fortune 500 investors and get bond ratings so they can borrow on their own.

India is also experiencing a revolution in its previously inequitable caste system. The main engine of this revolution has been a system of "reservations," India's version of affirmative action, in which seats are reserved in parliament and state assemblies for ex-untouchables and tribals in proportion to their share of the population (15 and seven percent respectively). Reservations of government jobs and of seats and scholarships in educational institutions available to ex-untouchables and ex-tribals were recently extended to lower castes, the 27 percent of the population classified as OBCs (Other Backward Classes). The reservation system has radically transformed the social landscape. On the occasion of India's fiftieth anniversary, Indian and U.S. media often noted that K.R. Narayanan, a Dalit, or ex-untouchable, had been elected president of India, a result comparable to addressing racism in the United States by electing Colin Powell president. Also significant was the lower-caste composition of the United Front government's Cabinet; ironically, its only upper-caste minister was a Communist. The U.F. Cabinet stood in marked contrast to the upper-caste, upper-class Cabinets of India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, a Brahmin and a graduate of Harrow and Cambridge, and those of his daughter, Indira Gandhi, and his Doon School grandson, Rajiv Gandhi.

The reservation policy is not without critics, who argue that it has had negative effects on the quality of administration and education. And, to be sure, the entry of individuals from previously excluded groups has brought a measure of farce into Indian politics: Tamilnadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha, sharing glamour and saris with her loyal supporters at a 100 million rupee wedding for her godson; Prime Minister Deve Gowda's napping during Cabinet meetings. But, with 49 percent of the population now benefiting from preferences, nothing like California's Proposition 209 is in the offing.

Though hardly as visible or dramatic as social change, economic change has also contributed to the success of pluralism in India. Thanks to a successful green revolution and the entrepreneurial energy of India's market-oriented farmers, the country can feed itself; food production stays about half a percent ahead of a two percent annual population growth. Compared to East and Southeast Asian economies, India's growth appears anemic. But income distribution looks better: those in the bottom 20 percent get slightly more of the gross national product and the top 20 slightly less than each did ten or 20 years ago. While the number of those living below the poverty line has increased absolutely, it has *decreased* proportionally, from about 50 percent of the population at independence in 1947 to about 30 percent today.

During the early 1990s, the gains of economic growth, social inclusion, and ethnic and cultural autonomy were threatened by a rising tide of Hindu nationalism. The

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movement was precipitated by Prime Minister V.P. Singh's abrupt announcement that he was going to implement the twelve-year-old report of the constitutionally mandated Mandal Commission extending job and educational reservations to the lower-caste OBCs. The upper-caste, Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) read the move as a political maneuver by Singh's minority government to win a midterm snap poll by mobilizing India's marginalized "minorities," lower-caste OBCs, untouchables, and Muslims.

The BJP responded by appealing to *Hindutva* (Hindu unity): India is one, and it should not be divided by class, caste, or religion. Just as the U.S. and the countries of Europe understand themselves as Christian nations, the BJP argued, so should India understand itself as a Hindu nation (*Hindu Rashtra*). A spurious secularism was privileging the Muslim minority while silencing the Hindu majority. Lower castes were handed jobs and educational opportunities at the expense of better-qualified, upper-caste candidates. The BJP appealed to India's resentful upper-caste Hindu males who felt ignored and denigrated.

In the 1991 national election, the BJP's vote almost doubled from eleven to 21 percent, and its parliamentary seats increased from 86 to 120. Finishing well ahead of Singh's Janata Dal Party and second to the Congress Party in a hung parliament, the BJP thought of itself as the next government of India.

The mounting *Hindutva* wave crested and broke on December 6, 1992. At Ayodhya, an ancient north Indian capital city, 200,000 militant Hindu youths broke through indifferent police lines, then used picks and iron rods to demolish the sixteenth-century Babri Masjid, a mosque built by Barbur, the first Mughal emperor. The mosque, they claimed, had to be destroyed because it was built on the site of Lord Rama's birth.

However, the destruction of the Babri Masjid proved to be a pyrrhic victory. Indian and world audiences saw Hindu nationalist youths in sweatbands and jeans breaking the law and using violence. Hindu extremism proved to be bad politics. The violent destruction of the Babri Masjid surprised and shocked moderate Hindu opinion, the backbone of the BJP's hopes of becoming India's governing party. In the 1996 national election, a chastened BJP sidelined its Muslim-baiting *Hindutva* plank and made the affable, moderate Atal Behari Vajpayee its prime-ministerial candidate. Though its share of the vote crept up to only 23.5 percent, its share of parliamentary seats jumped from 89 to 161. The BJP was asked by the president to form a government. But, even though he talked centrism and liberalization, Vajpayee could not persuade any members of parliament from other parties to join his government. The BJP was a pariah party.

The story may be different in March 1998 when, as seems likely, the BJP again wins the most seats in a fourth consecutive hung parliament. During the 18 months since June 1996, the BJP has continued to try to convince the country that it is moderate and pragmatic. The BJP's election manifesto advocates *Hindutva* as well as *swadeshi* (economic nationalism) and mentions the anti-Muslim uniform civil code. But it also features attacks on corruption, promises of stability, and economic appeals, not least to lower-caste and poor voters. Equally important, the BJP has gone the extra mile to accommodate ideologically diverse coalition partners at the state and national levels.

Even so, doubts remain about the BJP's commitment to moderation and centrism. The BJP's links to the militantly Hindu nationalist Swayamsevak Sangh, and to the Muslim-baiting Vishwa Hindu Parishad, raise even more serious concerns about the party's centrism than do the Republican Party's links to the Christian Coalition. Ultimately, the BJP's future course will be affected by the outcome of the election. The last-minute intervention in the 1998 election campaign by Sonia Gandhi, the Italian-born Roman Catholic daughter-in-law and widow of assassinated prime ministers Indira and Rajiv Gandhi, respectively, may save the Congress Party from extinction and prevent the BJP from forming a government. The possibility that a naturalized citizen might be the next prime minister led L.K. Advani, the hard-line BJP president, to propose, pointedly, that India emulate the U.S. constitutional provision by requiring that the prime minister be "a natural-born citizen."

The imperatives of electoral arithmetic make it likely that the BJP has put ethnic cleansing behind it. It has not shed its extremists and hard-liners, but its top leaders, whatever their ideology, recognize that living with difference is a condition for governing India. Instead of conjuring a Hindu nation that denies or obliterates difference, the BJP has had to embrace the very social revolution—opening educational opportunities and government jobs to lower castes and sharing power with them, accommodating Muslims—that its 1990 *Hindutva* ideology was designed to preempt.

John Kenneth Galbraith may have provided the key to the Indian enigma when, in his 1969 memoir *Ambassador's Journal*, he characterized India as a "functioning anarchy." Galbraith's Western ear was probably responding to the cacophony of India's endemic pluralism. But, by modifying "anarchy" with "functioning," he made clear that India's brand of pluralism works. Fifty years after independence, this pluralist system remains alive and well. It has weathered challenges from Hindu nationalism, been revitalized by protracted social revolution, and been sustained by a culturally diverse federal system and a pluralist state that knows how to share sovereignty. If India's economic performance has been disappointing, it has still attracted significant levels of foreign investment. In today's world of failed and failing states, troubled transitions to democracy and market economies, civil wars and ethnic cleansing, and Asian bailouts, India has shown a knack not only for steady growth, but also for living with difference.

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THE BIG DEBATE

By Peter Beinart

To understand Governor George W. Bush, one must first understand the Republican Party of Texas. And, to understand what is probably the most radical state Republican Party in the United States, a good place to start is the controversy over "school to work."

In 1994, Congress passed the School to Work Opportunities Act, which authorized money to help schools join with corporations to train students for the local job market. The law, designed to bolster the nation's lackluster system of vocational education, was backed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers. To take advantage of the new federal funding, Governor Bush incorporated school to work into the state's educational curriculum and sent it to the elected state Board of Education. Nine of the board's 15 members—six Democrats and three Republicans—signed on. But five members, all Republicans, refused. Board Member Bob Offutt protested "the federal incursion to make schools merely training centers for business and industry." One of his supporters testified that the new curriculum would make "big business the consumers of education, not parents."

Offutt and the other dissenters are commonly described as members of the religious right. And they are. But their opposition to school to work had nothing to do with biblical, or even traditional, morality. It stemmed in part from their general hostility to federal power: the state party's platform, which was written by their Christian conservative allies, claims that the federal government has no legitimate role in education, health care, or tax collection. But that doesn't entirely explain their opposition. School to work was not big-government liberalism: testifying in its favor at the state board were corporations like Apple and Southwestern Bell. Yet that corporate involvement made Offutt and the others more suspicious, not less. And therein lies the crux of the emerging ideology of the Texas right, an ideology that goes beyond just moral conservatism or hostility to government. Its adherents, who today dominate the state Republican Party, fear large and distant concentrations of power—not only governmental, but corporate as well. It was the collusion between the two that made school to work a prime target.

It is over this issue of bigness that George W. Bush has defined himself as governor. Time and again, his state party's belief in the illegitimacy of centralized authority has collided with his belief in its responsible and energetic management. And thus Bush, the frontrunner for his party's presidential nomination in 2000, has found himself at the vanguard of a debate that preoccupies American conservatism: how to harness the anti-Washington and anti-Wall Street populism unleashed by the end of the cold war so that it doesn't slam up against the principles of the Republican Party establishment. The governor hasn't yet found his authentic voice on the national stage. But, when he does, it may well be as the spokesman for something like "national-greatness conservatism," an emerging brand of conservatism that tries, against the currents pushing the American right toward the worship of localism, to justify the exercise of concentrated power.

The opponents of bigness didn't always control the Texas Republican Party. When George W.'s dad led the Houston GOP during the early 1960s, it was still the party of upscale Episcopalians and Presbyterians; most evangelicals voted Democratic. But, today, the Texas Republican Party is an almost pure embodiment of the religious right. The party chairman made her name in politics when, outraged by Ann Richards's support for gay rights, she laid a black wreath at Richards's campaign headquarters bearing the words, "Death to the Family." Her vice chairman is president of WallBuilders, an organization dedicated to proving that the separation of church and state is a myth. The state's male representative to the Republican National Committee (each state sends one man and one woman) heads the Texas Home School Coalition. The state's female representative is a former official of Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum. The chairman of the most recent party platform committee is the former projects director of Texas Right to Life.

Almost nowhere else has the religious right grown as rapidly as in Texas. Dick Weinhold, finance director for Pat Robertson's 1988 presidential campaign, took over the Texas Christian Coalition in 1991 and, within three years, had added 127 local chapters. By early 1994, his supporters were ready to bid for party control. Robertson sent a letter to 50,000 activists asking them to join "Operation Precinct."

After the polls close on primary day in Texas, voters

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participate in their party's precinct conventions. Turnout for such conventions has traditionally been miniscule—often no more than ten or 20 people show up. But members of the Christian Coalition saw the humble precinct conventions as their route to party control. They trained supporters in parliamentary procedure, and, on primary day 1994, they swamped precinct conventions all over the state, electing the delegates to the party's state senatorial conventions and then to the Texas Republican Convention that summer.

In June, at the state convention in Fort Worth, the religious right ambushed the Republican party leadership and overthrew it. Fifty-five percent of the Fort Worth delegates had never before attended a convention, and over 60 percent identified themselves as evangelical. They forced Party Chairman Fred Meyer to abandon his reelection bid, claiming he was too moderate. Elected officials and fund-raisers, led by Phil Gramm, proposed Representative Joe Barton as his replacement. But, despite Barton's conservative record, the newcomers, distrustful of Washington politicians and big businessmen, rejected him. Bill Price of Texans United for Life told *The Dallas Morning News* that delegates objected to Barton because "Joe had been anointed on the mountaintop in Washington." The newcomers chose activist Tom Pauken instead. When some delegates proposed a pro forma resolution honoring senators Gramm, Kay Bailey Hutchison, and then-gubernatorial candidate Bush, it was voted down.

To grasp the ideology that the activists have brought to the party, it is important to remember that the religious right sees its motivation as defensive—its members have entered politics in the past two decades because they believe their subculture is under siege. It is not just that feminism and gay rights have made the wider society inhospitable. Just as importantly, the spread of mass media and government bureaucracy has made it harder for Christian conservatives to insulate themselves. This assault on local autonomy is felt particularly strongly in the South because the region's recent urbanization has integrated many previously distinct towns and communities into culturally pluralistic metropolitan areas. As Gary Bauer has said, "Our opponents will often picture us attempting to exert our values on the rest of society. I think the people we work with see it as they were willing to go about their lives with a sort of separate-but-equal existence and that it's the culture that keeps pushing more into their homes and their schools and so forth."

It is this fear of cultural invasion that explains the Christian conservative aversion to far-off, centralized authority. Rather than being hostile to government per se, the attitudes of the religious right are heavily conditioned by government's size and distance. A poll by professors John Green of the University of Akron and James Guth of Furman University found religious Republicans three times as hostile to federal government spending as secular Republicans but twice as *supportive* of spending by local government. Even the term "pro-family," while usually interpreted in reference to opponents like gays or feminists, can be understood in terms of size: the family as opposed to larger centers of powers like the state or the media.

At the same convention where the religious right captured the Texas Republican Party, George W. Bush accepted its nomination for governor. Part owner of the Texas Rangers baseball team, he came to the race with no discernible ideology and used that to his advantage by campaigning on four popular and uncontroversial proposals: tort reform, juvenile-justice reform, education reform, and welfare reform. Bush's fund-raising ability scared off primary challengers, and the 1994 GOP tidal wave swept him past incumbent Ann Richards. Since taking office, however, the governor has clashed often with the right wing of his party. And underlying these quarrels has been the question of bigness.

The Texas legislature meets during odd numbered years only. In 1993, it introduced a sunset clause into the state's byzantine education code, requiring that it be rewritten from scratch the following session—what would turn out to be Governor Bush's first. There was little doubt that the rewrite would shift power from the state to local communities; Bush's innovation was "home rule education districts," which allow localities, in theory, to exempt themselves from most state regulations. And so, at first, the GOP's right wing saw the governor as a like-minded believer that government should organize itself, as much as possible, in its smallest and nearest form.

But, as the right would soon learn, Bush was motivated less by the belief that education policy should necessarily be made close to home and more by the belief that power should be simultaneously localized and centralized. This critical difference became apparent last year, when Bush followed his program for local control with a proposal to end "social promotion" by making graduation from the third, fifth, and eighth grades dependent on passing the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). Bush's plan, which is similar to one instituted by Chicago's Democratic Mayor Richard Daley and hailed by President Clinton, stems from the neoliberal premise that government should give localities enough authority so they can fairly be held accountable for educating their students to a uniform standard. In other words, localism as a means to a common end.

For the activists who control the state party, however, local control is an end in itself. Donna Ballard, a religious conservative on the Board of Education, told me that the TAAS should be eliminated and that teachers themselves should decide whether students ascend to the next grade. To the extent school districts participate in standardized tests, she believes they should be able to choose which ones. Cathie Adams, head of the Texas Eagle Forum, says Bush's plan "goes against freedom."

A second clash between Bush and his party also came over education—more precisely, over its funding. Texas schools are financed in part by the state and in part by local property taxes. During the oil slump of the

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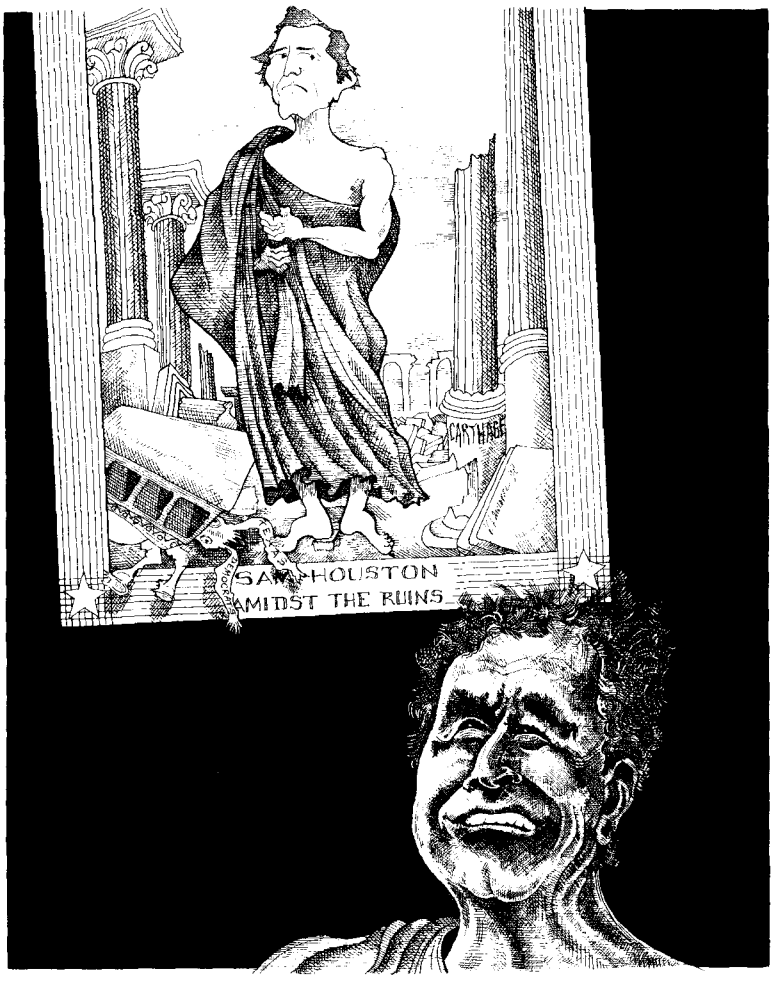
1980s, property-tax rates were raised to compensate for declining real estate values, and so, in recent years, with real estate values rising, property taxes have skyrocketed. Last spring, Bush proposed substantially cutting property taxes and paying for the cut through higher sales and motor-vehicle taxes and a new business tax. His plan would have increased the state's portion of education funding from 45 to 63 percent. As Bush said in his 1997 State of the State address, "We are relying on a patchwork system that is inherently unequal and unfair to fund our very future."

But, to the Texas right, "patchwork" is not a dirty word. It sounds, in fact, a lot like local control. Bush's plan, by centralizing funding, would have increased the power of the Texas Education Agency, which the Republican Party platform says should be abolished. Right-wingers also attacked the proposal for redistributing the tax burden rather than just reducing it.

Bush insisted (correctly) that his plan would reduce taxes overall. But the plan was, primarily, a tax shift. It stemmed from classic pre-Ronald Reagan conservative principles: insure that government is financially sound rather than cutting government for its own sake. In 1995, the State Republican Executive Committee called for a freeze on government spending, except for education. But, under Bush, state spending has grown by over eight percent. The governor privately told an Austin journalist that he doesn't believe there is much fat in the Texas budget.



GEORGE W. BUSH BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Bush sent his tax proposal to the state House of Representatives, where it was modified by a committee led by a Democrat named Paul Sadler. Party Chairman Tom Pauken condemned the legislation as alien to "Republican philosophy," insisting that voters must be able to "trust that if they pull the GOP lever that their taxes will go down, not up, and not sideways." But the governor stuck with the modified property-tax bill and with the Democrats who were pushing it. When Pauken publicly attacked Sadler, four Bush allies took out an ad in Sadler's hometown newspaper that read: "We're not in the habit of praising Democrats. But Rusk County has a leader to be proud of in State Rep. Paul Sadler." As it turned out, the bill passed the House, garnering the bulk of Democratic but not Republican votes, only to die in the Republican-majority Senate.

Bush's warm relations with Austin's powerful Democrats have paid off politically. Democratic Lieutenant Governor Bob Bullock has endorsed him for reelection, which would be unusual even if Bullock were not godfather to the daughter of Gary Mauro, Bush's Democratic opponent. Sadler says that, in the privacy of a closed voting booth, a majority of the legislature's Democrats would opt to give Bush a second term. Mark McKinnon, former political consultant to Ann Richards, is thinking about taking on Bush as his first Republican client.

Charm and flattery are part of the reason Bush has so successfully forged relationships across the aisle. But there's more to it than that. He has more in common ideologically with the legislature's Democratic leadership than with many in his own party. Most of the legislature's white Democrats are conservative. They are interested in neither cultural innovation nor cultural resistance, but rather in social stability, and they see governmental and corporate power as complementary. In fact, it was the Texas business establishment, led by a computer executive named Ross Perot, which convinced the state to intervene more aggressively in local education during the 1980s, even though it meant higher taxes. And business has strongly backed Bush's plan for statewide testing to combat social promotion. As Bruce Buchanan of the University of Texas puts it, Bush has "maintained the center—the conservative centrist business coalition."

Bush, for instance, spoke out loudly in favor of the 1995 Mexican peso bailout, something that mattered greatly to Texas business, which feared the impoverishment of its Mexican customer base. But, while Bush identified with his state's cross-border corporate interests, the religious right in his party saw the interests

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behind the bailout as far less benign. Suspicion of the globalist maneuverings of elite businessmen and financiers are a consistent theme in Pat Robertson's writings. In his book *The New World Order*, Robertson writes: "The money barons are getting much closer to control of the world's economy than even they may have believed was possible." And so, in a party stocked with Robertson's followers, Bush's support for the bailout was not universally applauded. Texas Representative Steve Stockman, a man who once held mandatory prayer meetings in his office, took the lead in the House. Not only did Stockman oppose the loan guarantees, but, echoing Robertson, he implied that a conspiracy lay behind them. Placing Robert Rubin at the center, Stockman alleged: "There are a lot of what appear to be his friends and contacts that would benefit from the bailout."

The same hostility to bigness that leads the religious right to support local control over state intervention and states' rights over federal power leads it to favor national sovereignty over global integration. The state platform advocates not only American withdrawal from the United Nations and the abolition of the Federal Reserve, but "a thorough investigation, to be conducted by an independent investigator appointed by the U.S. House of Representatives, to determine whether the Council on Foreign Relations and Trilateral Commission are promoting the establishment of a one-world government to the detriment of U.S. interests and sovereignty." John Green and James Guth found that, nationally, religious Republicans were more than twice as likely as secular Republicans to support protectionism.

George W. Bush, needless to say, comes from a political tradition that does not consider globalization a threat. During the 1950s, his grandfather, Senator Prescott Bush, supported the establishment of a standing U.N. army. Two decades later, Bush's father led America's delegation to the U.N.; and, after that, he led a war in the Persian Gulf to protect the West's access to petroleum pumped by the giant oil companies. Both men also sided with businesses in favor of open immigration.

Governor Bush's strong pro-immigration stance, while sincere, also has a corporate tinge to it. As he told *The Weekly Standard* last year, "There are a lot of jobs people in Texas won't do—laying tar in August or chopping cedars." When Pat Buchanan bashed Mexico at a United We Stand conference in Dallas in August 1995, Bush warned: "It is easy for some to pick on our friends from the South ... and I don't like it." The governor has resisted Proposition 187-style measures in Texas and doesn't even support English-only laws. But, while his leadership, combined with concern about the rising Latino vote, has so far kept the Texas right quieter on the topic of immigration than its counterpart in California, disagreements lurk beneath the surface. The state Republican platform calls not only for cutting off benefits to illegal immigrants, but for ending birthright citizenship. And Buchanan won the endorsement of 25 out of the 62 members of the Texas State Republican Executive Committee in 1996.

George W. Bush approaches a potential run for the presidency in 2000 with several advantages. Pollster Bill McInturff theorizes that there are four categories that define Republican primary contestants: the establishment candidate, the outsider candidate, the conservative candidate, and the anti-abortion candidate. Bush's strength lies in his control of the first two. He is the establishment candidate by virtue of his name. *Standard* editor William Kristol notes that in his three runs for the presidency, and two for veep, the elder Bush developed an unparalleled political organization. "The Bush network remains the most extensive operation in the Republican Party by far," Kristol says. "Every day at The Palm [restaurant] there is some group of Republican operatives and money people colluding and conspiring—and a lot of it is, of course, ineffectual, but they are doing so on behalf of George W. He is their candidate." That network is George W.'s inheritance; he has already consulted with advisers to his father like media guru Don Sipple.

But, because he has never held office in Washington, Bush can also call himself an outsider. However disingenuous a claim that is for someone who played a key role in his father's campaigns and administration (George W. is reputedly the one who told John Sununu he was fired), Bush's personality makes it more plausible. He is more culturally Texan than his father and more comfortable in a crowd of ordinary people. Furthermore, many of the candidates against whom he will be contrasted—Quayle, Kemp, Alexander, Buchanan, Forbes—lost their credibility as outsiders several election cycles ago.

Bush's problem is in filling McInturff's other two categories: conservative and anti-abortion. The governor is hardly a liberal. During his term in office, he tried to cut off additional benefits for women who got pregnant on welfare, he made it legal to prosecute 14-year-olds as adults, he weakened the rights of consumers to sue companies, and he signed the death warrant for Karla Faye Tucker. Unions in Texas hate him. But more important to conservative primary activists are abortion and taxes, and here he is vulnerable.

Many on the religious right in Texas suspect that Bush doesn't care much about abortion, which is probably true. Had he not downplayed his pro-life stance, Bush would likely not have won over the upscale Republican women he needed to defeat Ann Richards. When the governor brings up abortion, it is usually to say that the law is "settled" and that he would like to see more adoptions. This vulnerability has led Bush to court Ralph Reed, who this year visited Bush at the governor's mansion.

More worrisome is the question of taxes, on which Bush inherits problems that he has compounded with his property-tax proposal. Bush will argue, correctly, that his proposal cut taxes overall, but he did propose raising two kinds of taxes and creating a new one. Somewhere,

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media guys are already dreaming up ads that merge his face into his father's under the caption "No New Bushes." The governor's response will likely be to encourage spoiler candidates like Gary Bauer or Alan Keyes who keep the right from coalescing around any one standard bearer. And, if he needs to, he'll hint that he has more in common with Ronald Reagan than with his own presidential flesh and blood. Asked to compare father and son, George W.'s chief political adviser, Karl Rove, told *The St. Petersburg Times* last year that they both have a "great sense of courtesy," but the governor is "a lot more philosophically driven." Expect a lot more paternal faint praise before the millennium is out.

All these tactical hurdles are probably surmountable, and surmounting them may be enough to get Bush the nomination. But none of them says much about what the governor actually believes. Bush has a stock speech about restoring individual responsibility and changing a culture that says, "If it feels good, do it." But the speech is predictable and clichéd. A hundred other Republican pols give it with more creativity and verve, and it bombed at last year's Republican presidential cattle call in Indianapolis.

The three things about which Bush shows real passion are immigration, free trade, and his testing program to make sure that no child graduates third grade without knowing how to read. What they have in common is managed bigness—Bush believes in international engagement, as opposed to the growing conservative obsession with national sovereignty, and in government's ability to enforce common principles rather than letting each community set its own. These ideas, unlike the lines he spouts in his stump speech, are controversial and potentially important. Few other Republican politicians are championing them.

For decades, two things restrained right-wing hostility to centralized authority: the cold war, which legitimized capitalist internationalism, and Northern Republicanism, with its traditional belief in federal power. Now, with the cold war over and the GOP weak in the Northeast, those bulwarks are gone. Under the influence of its new Southern and Western base, elements of the party are veering toward a right-wing populism hostile to the elites who have trampled old communal boundaries. The conservative establishment has had success in aiming that resentment at Washington, but in so doing it has denied conservatives the ability to constructively use national government. And the same populism is also manifesting itself in hostility to internationalist corporate elites, which is bound to cause the Republican Party serious problems.

In a series of articles in the *Standard* and *The Wall Street Journal*, David Brooks and William Kristol have suggested that the federal government, under conservative leadership, might use morality-driven, activist foreign policy and a series of grand domestic initiatives to halt the right's drift into localism and insularity. Steve Forbes seems taken with the idea and frequently mentions Theodore Roosevelt, Brooks's model for what he calls national-greatness conservatism.

But Bush would be a better spokesman. One problem for national-greatness conservatives is that, since the end of the cold war, internationalism has often seemed crassly commercial, driven by private rather than public interest. Forbes, owner of an airplane named "Capitalist Tool," is not the man to dispel that perception. Furthermore, since the challenge to conservative internationalism comes primarily from the Sun Belt, its defense would have more legitimacy coming from a Southerner. In fact, Texas's relationship with Mexico—not only its economic ties, but the truly bicultural ethos that has developed in parts of the state—could be a model for post-cold war conservative internationalism. Bush, like New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, understands that only by embracing America's new global ties, especially with the Third World, can the Republican Party start to bid for the allegiance of this country's new immigrants. And only if the GOP reclaims significant Asian and Latino support will it be able to reject nativism and still win elections.

Bush's declaration that he will not allow Texas children to leave third grade without knowing how to read also lends itself to the national-greatness idea. It suggests a conservatism that uses government to build a sense of common obligation rather than automatically deferring to local prerogatives. Bush recognizes the danger that unchecked localism can pose to democratic accountability—the danger, in Theodore Roosevelt's words, "in having the power insufficiently concentrated so that no one can be held responsible to the people for its use."

Roosevelt was speaking at another time of ideological combat over the legitimacy of distant, concentrated power. A century ago, politics did not always divide supporters of big business against supporters of big government. The climactic presidential campaign of the Progressive era, the contest of 1912, pitted Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom, which called for both decentralized government and decentralized industry, against Roosevelt's New Nationalism, which advocated corporate concentration regulated by an empowered federal state. Wilson called on the courts to break up monopolies and thus to recreate an economy capable of being managed by state and local government. Roosevelt deemed the trend toward business concentration inevitable and envisioned a similarly concentrated federal government powerful enough to ensure that monopolies served the national interest.

If Texas is a guide, the national Republican Party is poised for a similar fight in the coming years. One side will make the case for the rights of states and localities, the virtue of small, unfettered communities, and the inward-looking interests of small business as opposed to the global interests of big business and finance. The other will argue for a vigorous federal government that works to promote a shared national purpose and embraces the cultural cosmopolitanism brought by America's increased interdependence with the rest of the world. It is a debate waiting for George W. Bush. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Irishmen

Those who are concerned about the Irish troubles may be distressed by **The Break** (Castle Hill). The more concerned, the more distressed. This is one more gimmicky use of the situation in Northern Ireland, which has become, in Irish and other hands, a film plot springboard as much as a grievous subject.

The Break is based on an idea by Stephen Rea, who plays the leading role, and it may have had a theme to begin with. An IRA man breaks out of a prison in the North, manages to make it to New York, and joins up with Guatemalans who are involved in political terrorism of their own. The idea presumably was to dramatize the plight of a believer stripped of the means of action for his beliefs, who then adopts another cause out of his need for causes. But in Ronan Bennett's screenplay we get no more than a drifter who drifts quasi-somnolently into another terrorist group only because he gets involved with a young woman in the group.

Robert Dornhelm's directing cheapens every possible attempt at seriousness. Cliché after cliché of shot and frame is heaped upon us. But the central trouble is the protagonist. Instead of presenting a sort of Sartrean character in search of an armature for his terrorist life, the script gives us a leaf floating on a stream, virtually affectless except for a sex encounter, who chances into a second cause, and who makes a grand gesture at the end that is unrelated to the man we have known. (For a real ending in that vein, see Sartre's *Dirty Hands*.)

Alfred Molina, so weirdly crazy in *Boogie Nights*, slogs through a humdrum role here as the young woman's brother. But what completes the picture's wreck is the misapprehension of Rea as actor by himself and others. His performance only italicizes the amorphously written role. He comes on as, supposedly, a quiet storm center, potentially explosive, an Alain Delon figure of tacit sex and tension. People bustle around him, while he is quiet, which is meant to deepen his power. But Rea doesn't have that power. As he showed in *The Crying Game* and *Michael Collins*, he is a good and dependable actor, no more. The misperception of his charisma doubles the script's central vacancy, and helps further to turn what might have been an interesting drama into just another switch on the IRA theme.

Obviously the Northern Ireland troubles are not the first to be chewed into routine film fare, and they won't be the last. But it's painful to turn from the Belfast press reports, still horrible, horribly familiar, to see the subject clumsily exploited. The makers of *The Break* may even have been sincere in their motives: one can see that. But it's not the first time that good intentions have produced trash because the people involved had insufficient talent.

Bernard F. Dukore is a preeminent Shaw scholar who has contributed greatly to the (still-continuing) taxonomy of Shaw's career. There is so much material on so many subjects that various editors have arranged in books—Shaw on religion, Shaw on doctors, Shaw on Ireland, etc., etc.—that one might think the field exhausted. Wrong. (We can almost hear Shaw chuckling as he says it.) Dukore's major editorial work so far is his four-volume edition of Shaw's theater criticism, which may be briefly described as a blessing. But Dukore has also done a lot of work on Shaw's writings for and about film, and this goes on.

In 1968, Dukore prepared an edition of the screenplay of *Saint Joan* which Shaw wrote in 1934–36. (He tells us that Otto Preminger didn't even know of the existence of this screenplay when he directed his 1957 film of *Joan* from Graham Greene's flaccid version.) Subsequently Dukore edited *The Collected Screenplays of Bernard Shaw*; and two years ago he edited the correspondence of Shaw and Gabriel Pascal, the entrepreneur who produced three films of Shaw plays. (This book was in the University of Toronto Press's series of volumes of Shaw correspondence, done by topic.)

Now Dukore presents **Bernard Shaw on Cinema** (Southern Illinois University Press, 187 pp., $39.95 cloth, $19.95 paper). Here are 107 articles, interviews, and letters to the press that are concerned with film. The order is chronological, 1908 to the year of Shaw's death, 1950. Through the book we can glimpse the arrival of film in the world, particularly from a playwright's view, and how it became established as an immense factor in a playwright's thinking.

Shaw's besetting sin, and virtue, is apparent from the beginning of the book: nothing ever happened in the world that he somehow hadn't expected and

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Amistad. *Maligned because a successful Hollywood director dared to tackle a serious subject, this account of an 1839 slave rebellion has integrity of purpose and texture. (Reviewed 12/22/97)* **Boogie Nights.** *The L.A. porno-flick world in the late 1970s. Gritty, but in a multi-stranded, nearly epic way, more than gritty. (11/10/97)* **The Sweet Hereafter.** *Ian Holm is splendid as a lawyer who tries to help a town that lost many of its children in a school-bus accident. Splendid, too, is the entire drama. (12/8/97)* **Wag the Dog.** *Tired of the Lewinsky realities? Turn to fiction that antecedes it. Funnier now, and more unsettling, because of the news. (2/2/98)* **—SK**

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couldn't explain. With our superior hindsight we can see how slow he was to recognize that there is a distinct art of film, but his belief that, from the start, he knew more about filmmaking than most filmmakers was, and to some extent remained, justified. What he quickly perceived and argued on all his life was the special problem of censorship that film entailed.

It's well known that Shaw was a fanatic about photography. (The papers that he bequeathed to the London School of Economics include at least 10,000 of his photographs. That is not a misprint.) What Dukore clarifies is the surprising extent to which Shaw was involved with film. In 1946 he was asked, "If you had your time over again, would you write for the screen rather than the stage?" The answer was simple: "Yes." (In 1908 Tolstoy made a comparable comment vis-à-vis his plays.) As it was, in addition to earlier screen adaptations of his work, from 1937 to 1945 Shaw wrote only one new play, "*In Good King Charles's Golden Days*," which he intended as a film; the rest of that time he spent on screenplays, including *Pygmalion*, which won an Oscar.

The extent of Shaw's film curiosities, animosities, admirations is well displayed in this collection. (I wonder why Dukore omitted the prologue to the *Major Barbara* film that Shaw did for America. Dukore includes the prologue to *Pygmalion*.) There's one pleasantly surprising conversation, with the actor Adolphe Menjou in 1928, about the advent of sound—which Shaw had predicted 20 years before. Presumably he knew Menjou through the latter's appearance in Chaplin's *A Woman of Paris*.

Shaw's enthusiasm for Chaplin winds through the book like a bright ribbon. (In Volume Two of the *Collected Letters* is one that he wrote to Thomas Hardy's widow after Hardy's funeral: "If only you knew how I wanted at the end to swoop on you; tear off all that villainous crepe ... make you come off, *with him*, to see a Charlie Chaplin film!") On the cover and the title page of Dukore's book is a photograph taken on Shaw's California visit in 1933, at a luncheon given for him by Marion Davies. On his left are his hostess, Louis B. Mayer, and Clark Gable. On his right is Chaplin. •

The Humanitarian Illusion

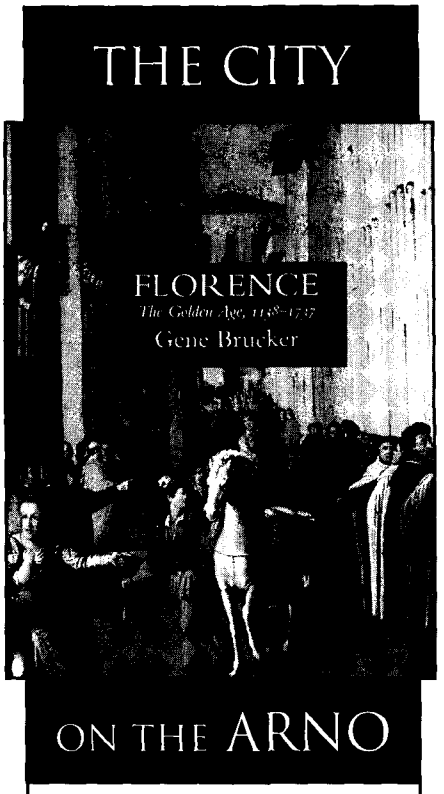
By David Rieff

The Warrior's Honor: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience by Michael Ignatieff

(Metropolitan, 207 pp., $24.95)

A couple of years ago, after landing on a poorly graded dirt airstrip outside a village in South Sudan, I found myself, and the photographer friend who was with me, suddenly being detained instead of being taken to the refugee camp that we had come to see. Our captors were Dinkas, tall, thin, unsmiling. They were also children, the oldest among them not more than 15. In places such as Sudan, child soldiers are always the most to be feared; they kill easily, without compunction. And so we were afraid. They were naked except for the very old Nikes on their feet—the gift, I later learned, of Catholic Relief Services, an American humanitarian group. And the very new Kalashnikov assault rifles cradled in their arms—they were the gift of ... well, that's another story. We were held in a hut for hours, and things might have turned out differently had not an official of the SPLA, the guerrilla group that controlled the region, happened to be in the area. He bustled in, dressed down the boys who were holding us, and escorted us to the relief agency compound where we had been meant to stay.

The SPLA is a formation that prides itself on its efficiency. We had its permission to come, and what had happened was not supposed to have happened. As a result, our deliverer was embarrassed and unhappy. As he walked with us, he tried to explain. The current fighting was intense, he told us. All the men were engaged on the front line, as the SPLA tried once more to take the government-held town of Kapoeta, and so the rear areas were being garrisoned by child soldiers. "You can't trust these boys," he said, shaking his head regretfully. "They have too much damn juice flowing in them."



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Wars such as the one in South Sudan, which appear senseless to the outsiders whose knowledge of them is usually no more than a few flakes of information garnered from a couple of minutes on the evening news or a magazine-ish piece in a newspaper; and soldiers such as the Dinka children who held my life in their hands in South Sudan: these are the harsh realities that Michael Ignatieff tries to make intelligible in his new book. The subject is enormously urgent and enormously difficult, and Ignatieff's book will be welcome to those who, like him, have spent a good deal of the past decade in places such as Bosnia and Rwanda, places where it is surely as appropriate to talk about slaughter as about war. And for other readers Ignatieff will deliver some very disturbing news.

There are dozens of such wars going on in the world at the present time. These are conflicts in which war and crime are often indistinguishable, in which conflict segues into massacre and massacre into humanitarian emergency, in a vast Moebius strip of horror. There are no rules. The war in South Sudan has been going on for 30 years; the war in Sri Lanka for more than a decade; the violence in Colombia for more than three decades; and the wars in Afghanistan for almost as long. And for none of them is the end in sight.

Ignatieff is determined to rescue some sense from these exercises in butchery, these wars fought without codes and (as he rightly insists) without honor. If we are not to deal with what we have seen by throwing up our hands in despair and consigning tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of human beings, and large sections of the world, to their Hobbesian fate, then we must provide some explanation for how we have come to this barbarous pass in what was, after all, supposed to be the new dawn of the post-world war world. Ignatieff is animated by the need for such an explanation.

Part travelogue, part moral investigation, *The Warrior's Honor* is also an effort to think through the alternative narrative of moral commitment that Ignatieff believes has arisen over the course of the past half-century. "We are scarcely aware," he writes, "of the extent to which our moral imagination has been transformed since 1945 by the growth of a language and practice of moral universalism, expressed above all in a shared human rights culture." Ignatieff is a member in good standing of that culture, and one of its eloquent defenders. It is to the furtherance of what he calls this "global conscience" that his book is really dedicated. This makes Ignatieff's enterprise a worthy one. It does not, alas, make it an adequate one.

Ignatieff has written a book about the Western conscience and the Western response to certain types of contemporary disaster; but he thinks that he has written about something universal. The universalizing impulse is an old tradition in the West and, for all the condemnations that it routinely incurs today, particularly in the universities, it has probably done at least as much good as harm. But universalism easily declines into sentimentalism, into a tortured but useless distance from the particulars of human affairs. Ignatieff's universalism is too sweeping, and his moralizing rhetoric is too stipulative. When, toward the end of his book, he calls upon the world "to awake from history," to "recover the saving distance between past and present and to distinguish between myth and truth," it is easy to sympathize with him; but the prescription is so banal, so simple. The fever swamps of nationalism will never be dissipated by these sorts of tender appeals. Given Ignatieff's own acquaintance with the killing fields of the world, it is surprising that he does not see this.

Much of what he has to say is important. He is haunted by the sense that we are witnessing the barbarization of war. This is too ahistorical (when was war not barbaric?), but there is much to support his intuition about our time. In World War I, the proportion of military to civilian casualties was ninety to ten. In World War II, the proportions were roughly even. Today, for every ten military casualties there are on average ninety civilian deaths. The proportions have been reversed. And the implications are staggering. In the past, it was possible to believe that war is not simply the same as slaughter; that slaughter is an infringement of the codes of war. In our time, as demonstrated in Somalia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Chechnya, murdering civilians and driving the survivors from their homes is often the main goal of a military offensive. Atrocity is no longer anomalous. It is normative.

The problem is not one of law. Ignatieff has a great deal to say about the laws of war, especially about the international humanitarian law that was codified in the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the two Additional Protocols set out in 1977, and which is administered by the Geneva-based International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). But wars are increasingly not fought between proper armies whose officers are bound by notions of honor and juridical discriminations and senses of proportion. Increasingly, the wars that ravage so much of our world are fought by fighters, not by soldiers; and many of those fighters are children. And the goal of these conflicts is often ethnic cleansing, the murder or at least the forcible expulsion of the civilian population of one's enemy—not the victory of one army over another. As the international legal scholar Kenneth Anderson has pointed out, in a brilliant attack on the idea of legal codification as a remedy for violations of the laws of war, "it is honor, not law, that is the engine driving such adherence as exists to the laws of war." A wide gap separates Ignatieff's standpoint from Anderson's, but they are asking the same essential question: What is to be done about wars in which the most basic notions of a soldier's honor are gone, in which the inhibitions that distinguished the battlefield from the slaughterhouse are no more?

It is to Ignatieff's credit that he confronts these questions. He wants to understand why so many wars are conducted criminally; and he also wants to challenge the easy horror about places such as the Great Lakes region of Africa when the same savagery may be found in many places elsewhere. He is right to believe that the cheap despair, the cynical fatalism, of many who watched the Rwandan genocide from afar was a moral solecism; a corollary outrage far away of the primary outrage at the scene. But when he writes that "an ethic of universal moral obligation among strangers [is] a necessity of life on the planet," when he calls for a new moral language that will address "the new experience of universal victimhood," it is hard to take him seriously. Trying to parse the world through such generalities obscures more than it clarifies, as Ignatieff should have known from his experiences in the field.

Ignatieff's ideal of moral obligation is, implicitly, an argument for a new interventionism. But it is not political intervention that he wishes to legitimate, it is humanitarian intervention. And this flies in the face of what we learned, or should have learned, from the experience of Somalia, say, or Bosnia: that humanitarian interventions are often themselves disastrous, that a political crisis (genocide is *always* a political crisis) must be addressed politically, by states, up to and including military action. What is needed is not belated and soft intervention. What is needed is prompt and hard intervention.

When Ignatieff stops proselytizing for his soft interventionism—he seems to think that the "moral narrative" that he

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is writing will combat disillusion and restore the will to engage—and begins to question some of the positions that are dearest to him, he is on much firmer ground. When he writes that "it is open to question whether justice or truth actually heals," it is possible to see the outlines of the very different book, the tougher and less sentimental book, that his experience in the field might have led him to write. But he wrote this book, not that one.

The cheap despair that Ignatieff deplores is indeed wrong; but it is wrong because it is ill-informed and unearned. Many of the foreign diplomats, the aid workers, and the journalists who witnessed these events firsthand were certainly not immune to despair. "You must save us," a Zairean boy scout said to me in the hell of Goma in 1994, as the Rwandan Hutu refugees lay dying all around us. "It is evident that we cannot save ourselves." Was this a demand for a politically incorrect paternalism? If it was, then so be it. For what this boy said was true, was real. Everyone who has been in the field knows this. The dying in Goma was not ended by humanitarians alone. It was ended by an airlift by the U.S. Air Force that allowed the humanitarians to do their emergency work. It was politics that made rescue possible.

Is this alone not cause for despair? And yet Ignatieff insists in the preface to his book that nothing about the current situation gives us "reason to be complacent. But there is also nothing that justifies disillusion." Really? In his description of the reaction of Cornelio Sommaruga, the secretary-general of the ICRC, to the cold-blooded murder in 1996 of six ICRC workers in a hospital that they were running in Chechnya, Ignatieff himself paints a very different picture. The fact that Sommaruga, in a Christmas speech at ICRC headquarters in Geneva in 1996, finally rejected pessimism hardly means that there was no reason to be pessimistic. Quite the contrary. Sommaruga gave the speech because the ICRC as an institution was deeply shocked, humiliated, and despairing. As it should have been. Ignatieff knows all this perfectly well; but he will not allow himself to become disillusioned. This is too bad. Disillusionment is the beginning of wisdom in the analysis of this terrible reality, this time of piety and iron.

But Ignatieff keeps the humanitarian faith, and the spirit of pathos that sustains it. In this spirit he provides a powerful account both of the horrors of the contemporary battlefield and of the inadequacies of the citizens of the rich

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world in their response to those horrors. Ignatieff sees the nature of war as changing before our gaze. It is through the televised images of war, he argues, that most of us derive our information (and our opinions) about these catastrophes, to the extent we are aware of them at all. And, as he explains, for all the advantages of immediacy and access that television brings to the stories that it tells, even this degree of mediation is an impediment to understanding and solidarity.

Ignatieff is keen to think through the implications of compassion, and of compassion fatigue. While these may be of central concern for Westerners, however, they are of secondary importance if one is trying to understand what these wars are really about, what the humanitarian interventions that have often followed in their wake actually accomplish, and how, to the extent that outsiders can change anything, some diminution of the horror can be achieved. Having spent a great deal of the past five years in places ranging from Eastern Slavonia to Angola, and having thought carefully about what he experienced, Ignatieff writes about his subject with authority. And yet he seems strangely incurious about these places in their particularity. There is something weirdly apolitical about this book, when its subject is, in truth, politics. Also something weirdly abstract, considering that it is a first-hand account. Somalia, Angola, Bosnia, Chechnya: they are often, in Ignatieff's hands, only exemplars and illustrations of some broader phenomenon—above all, the phenomenon of Western sensitivity, or the lack of it.

The British journalist Lindsey Hilsum once remarked that if you find yourself describing a situation as anarchic, you are probably not understanding what you are seeing. Ignatieff ignores much of the specificity of the situations that he discusses. The post-world war phenomenon of failed states is real enough, as is the barbarization of war; but the things that Ignatieff describes may be described very differently indeed. The Ethiopian famine, for example. Reading Ignatieff, one gets the impression that the real issue at stake was the Western reaction to the disaster. But the disaster in Ethiopia in the mid-1980s was not simply about the Western response. It was about the manipulation of that response by the dictatorship of Haile Mengistu Mariam's ruling council, the Dergue.

Indeed, the moral crisis that the Ethiopian experience engendered within the aid community, as Rony Brauman of *Médecins Sans Frontières* and Alex de Waal have pointed out, was less the effect of television—of its inconstancy and its pornographic vulgarity—than the hard political fact that the Dergue used aid as a tool of war. The food that was collected by such people as Bob Geldof was used to lure people to move to areas where the Ethiopian government wished to resettle them, and to free up resources that government might otherwise have committed to feed its citizens to prosecute the war effort against the Tigrayan guerrillas, who would eventually triumph in Ethiopia against the Eritrean separatists.

This is the dark side of the humanitarian impulse: despite the best intentions of the aid workers, and at times because of them, they become logisticians to the war efforts of warlords, fundamentalists, gangsters, and ethnic cleansers. And this is what has thrown contemporary humanitarianism into crisis. Ignatieff does not discuss this crisis. His book, indeed, is an unwitting symptom of it. For he does not seem to appreciate the extent to which the arguments that he makes need to be modified in light of the facts. It is insufficient, almost to the point of obtuseness, to intone, after Ethiopia and Somalia and Bosnia and Rwanda, about the need to respond; insufficient to measure success and failure in terms of how interested Western public opinion is and how activist Western governments are willing to be.

Indeed, the bitterest lesson of these events is that the humanitarian commitment to saving lives can have the unintended and unwanted effect of making certain political crises worse. One looks in vain for such a discussion in *The Warrior's Honor*. Ignatieff is curiously irenic when he talks about the role of international institutions. He is a stubborn disciple of Grotius, a firm believer in the inherent legitimacy of the international system. And for those who take this position, as Kenneth Anderson has written, "internationalism embodies a universalism that gives it this legitimacy ... [and this legitimacy] flows from the top down and enables the United Nations Security Council or other intervening [body] to impose order where it is, admittedly, desperately needed."

There is too much of "the West and the rest" in *The Warrior's Honor*. Ignatieff leans heavily on the Western idea of identity, according to which individuals and groups have an essence, however encrusted by traumas, false consciousness, or political fevers. But this is not the only way, or the best way, of parsing the world of the Bosnian Serbs or the Rwandan Hutus. An equally persuasive account would begin with the idea that people often, and particularly in hard times, construct their identities situationally, to serve their interests. As the Serbian film director Dusan Makaveyev remarked derisively in Belgrade in 1993, "You Americans are always looking to explain everything. There is no mystery about Radovan Karadzic. When he was with poets, he tried to be a good poet; when he was a doctor, he tried to be a good doctor; now that it is a time for bestiality, he is trying to be a good beast." (And that, too, is an oversimplification.) Ignatieff's inability to think critically about his liberal assumptions leads to inaccuracies and intellectual shortcuts. He asks "what has happened to make the world seem so dangerous and chaotic." But the world does not *seem* that way, it *is* that way, at least outside the sanctuary of rich countries where the savagery is under control and people are not so afraid of one another that they can be easily made to kill.

It is admirable that Ignatieff wants ardently to understand what the moral obligation of the West is toward these zones of catastrophe. But when he claims that "we all" feel an impulse to do something "when we see some terrible report on television from Bosnia or Rwanda or Afghanistan," it is hard not to feel that he is failing to ask the really discomfiting questions. He blames television for our meretriciously short attention span, for the inability of people in the West to mobilize themselves on behalf of people in Rwanda, Somalia, or Bosnia. But the explanation according to CNN is too easy. It is a kind of exoneration. (Turn off the television and save the world!)

There is another, grimmer explanation. The problem that Ignatieff rightly identifies may have more to do with the nature of human sympathy than with the structures or the failures of a particular technology. To put the matter starkly: Should the fate of Rwandan Tutsis or Bosnian Muslims really depend upon people in Akron, Ohio, or in Lyons, France? Will the citizens of Akron and Lyons ever care very much about the sufferings of the Rwandan Tutsis or the Bosnian Muslims? The fact that they can know about them, and see images of them on television, does not mean that human nature has changed. Is it really as abnormal, or as wrong, as Ignatieff imagines it to be, that we think more about family, friends, neighbors, and fellow citizens than about far away peoples and places? Most people are just trying to live their lives. In a secular age, solidarity is a piety, a career (often

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in service to the United Nations or the humanitarian relief agencies), or an activity of the most idealistic and prosperous among the childless young. And there is nothing wrong with this, at least nothing that will be remedied in this world. I am not defending selfishness or parochialism. I am insisting, rather, that morality get real; and the universalism that is the moral underpinning of Ignatieff's argument strikes me as unreal, as a very thin reed upon which to build an answer to genocide.

The implicit argument of *The Warrior's Honor*, again, is that no matter how bleak things may appear, there are no grounds for pessimism. If only the right people were put in charge, the world could be made a decent place. The great and the good, so familiar from all those U.N. commissions, make their requisite appearances in Ignatieff's book. There is Graça Machel, the companion of Nelson Mandela; and Ahmed Ould Abdallah, "an indefatigable fifty-five-year-old Mauritanian diplomat, who bears himself with the imperiousness of a Saharan chieftain"; and various ICRC delegates, each more civilized and world-weary than the next. Gilbert Holleufer is "a somber, thoughtful Swiss-German man with large, mournful eyes, [who understands] the contradictions." And the people of the ICRC, Ignatieff writes, are nothing less than "sentinels between the human and the inhuman."

Since Ignatieff believes that we are witnessing "a revolution in humanitarian concern," it is not surprising that he looks with such starry eyes on those who labor on his revolution's front lines. If only we in the West would properly commit ourselves, the horror could be brought to an end. Ignatieff is a meliorist in hell. The trouble is that hell is always lost on meliorists. Perhaps this is why he is indulgent toward the United Nations and adulatory in his account of the ICRC. The natural humanitarians and the professionals, driven to despair by the dark world of slaughter that succeeded the withdrawal of the great powers from much of the poor world, have become the last interventionists, the last liberals, the last believers in the good-works theory of history, in what Anderson has described as "the virtuous use of force."

Ignatieff's recent work represents a terrible reluctance to hear the entirety of the bad news. Nowhere is this more evident than in his writings on Bosnia. It was as if he wanted to be on both sides in that debate, to support the United Nations and to support its critics. (He praised a book of mine about Bosnia and he praised David Owen's memoir of trying to negotiate a Bosnian settlement; but Owen and I cannot both be right.) In a way, Ignatieff's writing demonstrates the analytical limitations of decency. He is a decent man projecting decency into places where it does not exist.

Consider his relatively benign account of accompanying Boutros Boutros-Ghali to Africa—Boutros-Ghali, who, as Ignatieff knew at the time, had the blood of the people of Bosnia on his hands. The role of the United Nations in Bosnia was active and complicitous. It was anything but that of catspaw and whipping boy to the permanent members of the Security Council, however much the current secretary-general and his American supporters now claim otherwise. (Or must we still argue about that?) Ignatieff certainly is haunted by Bosnia. In his narrative of the Boutros-Ghali trip, he returns again and again to Srebrenica. But he draws no conclusions from Srebrenica. His portrait of the former secretary-general is, on balance, a favorable one. It is almost as if Ignatieff *likes* to be haunted. (In his review of Ignatieff's book in *The New York Times Book Review*, Alan Ryan concluded with a similar sigh: "We end where we began, with the liberal looking at the horrors on the television screen, longing to act, but at a loss to know how, where and with what resources." This is just more pathos. How, where, and with what resources? It took exactly one belated NATO sortie to put a stop to the slaughter in Bosnia.)

The most depressing part of Ignatieff's account of his trip with the secretary-general is the extent to which the writer shares the international civil servant's aerial view of the conflicts that he is addressing along the way. What Ignatieff conveys is the feckless message that the secretary-general brings with him from New York, according to which the individual crises—Angola, Rwanda, Burundi—are leeched of the specificity that would make them comprehensible. Reading Ignatieff's account, you get a sense of what Boutros-Ghali was thinking. But there is no sense of what his African interlocutors were thinking. They remain a blur, rather like the televised images that Ignatieff deplores.

About the United Nations, Ignatieff is indulgent. About the International Committee of the Red Cross, he is credulous. The Red Cross workers are his heroes. He sees them as holding the line against barbarism. Again, he is both right and wrong. The ICRC does brilliantly in the field, but its adamant neutrality, its insistence on maintaining complete discretion in its dealings with the most appalling regimes, its proud aversion to the politics of the horrors, is hardly as unassailable as Ignatieff seems to think. The decision of the ICRC not to go public with what they knew about the Nazi camps is only the most celebrated example of the perils of this kind of neutrality, this inhumane humanitarianism. And little has changed. The ICRC still protects its secrecy. No one knows what bargains with murderers the organization is striking today, in the same smug belief in the sanctity of its "access" that it had half a century ago.

Ignatieff refers to the ICRC's disgraceful conduct in Nazi-occupied Europe, but he does not confront its implications. To a very large degree, indeed, the rise of private humanitarian organizations in Western Europe in the 1960s, above all the French organization *Médecins Sans Frontières*, was a direct repudiation of the ICRC's insistence on discretion and on deferring to the wishes of states. Confronted by the charnel house of Biafra, *Médecins Sans Frontières* defied the Nigerian authorities and operated behind rebel lines. They took the same risks in Afghanistan during the Russian occupation. To be sure, neither experience was without its political paradoxes and its moral difficulties, but it is strange, given the complex history of contemporary humanitarianism, that Ignatieff writes of the ICRC so uncritically.

Consider also Ignatieff's discussion of the murder of those six delegates of the ICRC in Chechnya in 1996. The importance of these killings to the future of the humanitarian enterprise cannot be overstressed, and Ignatieff is absolutely on the mark in fixing on them. A band of Chechen fighters burst into a hospital that the ICRC was running and killed the workers in cold blood. It was the most diabolical challenge to the humanitarian ethic of the ICRC; and it raised the question of whether humanitarians could even operate in war zones when the degree of disorder was as widespread as in Chechnya.

But again, killings are not merely symbols. They are the products of a particular war and a particular place. And the truth about the massacre in the Chechen hospital turns out to be complicated. Some within the ICRC say that the workers had antagonized the local fighters by stepping out of their traditional role of neutral medical personnel and allowing their hospital to be used by local people opposed to the continued fighting. So here, too, there is a story that needs to be told that is not emblematic, and does not lend

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itself to generalization, and may not coincide with the kind of somber moralizing that is Ignatieff's stock-in-trade. Indeed, Ignatieff's failure even to address this rumor—he surely must know the story—suggests that he has allowed his heart to get the better of his head. He is a wonderful writer, but he fails to confront the actual tangles about which he writes, and this makes his book as much an act of hubris as an act of witness. It is an odd criticism to make of such a book, but finally the world is much worse than this. •

The Big Sleep

By Geoffrey O'Brien

Night Train by Martin Amis

(Harmony, 175 pp., $20)

Whatever other purposes it may serve, the crime novel is our Book of Death. It is what we turn to—in lieu of the ivied churchyard or the skull on the desk or the hellfire sermon—for a regular and necessary reminder of mortality. A culture that in its daily rounds would rather not contemplate death, at any rate not in forms as stark as woodcuts of the Dance of Death or the skeletal sculptures in catacombs, becomes inured to the idea of its inevitability in the least depressing way: by favoring a genre in which death is first cause and chief thrill.

But if crime fiction has always held death at bay by transforming it into entertainment, reality keeps gaining ground. Even the lightest of fiction now finds it difficult to treat death as an unseemly intrusion into an otherwise well-ordered system of life, a mess for a detective to clear up. The relatively painless and bloodless deaths of early detective novels have given way to clinical realism, as popular taste has gravitated from the thrilling and the romantic toward the anxious and the forensic. For the neat little bullet hole or melodramatic dagger in the back we substitute the ten-page medical report extrapolating, with a kind of baroque lavishness, the ramifications of trauma.

This forensic turn is made to order for Martin Amis, whose new novel presents itself as an American thriller in the modern manner, with up-to-date technical gear and fresh-picked street talk. An Englishman in James Ellroy country, he needs to establish his credibility early on. His narrator in *Night Train* is a cop—a woman cop, and if that were not enough, a woman cop named Detective Mike Hoolihan—and it is important for her to demonstrate just how long and hard she has looked at horror: "I've seen them all: Jumpers, stumpers, dumpers, dunkers, bleeders, floaters, poppers, bursters.... I have seen the bodies of gang-raped nonagenarians. I have seen bodies left dead so long that your only shot at a t.o.d. is to weigh the maggots." Amis's tour de force in this vein is an autopsy scene recounted with brutal gusto—"Up come the flaps.... The breastplate comes out like a manhole lid.... The electric saw is circumnavigating Jennifer's cranium"—a scene with a hint of the mordant humor of the medieval memento mori.

Most crime fiction manages to temper the shock of its encounter with the deeply unpleasant with humor, or the intellectual detachment that comes with puzzle-solving, or the adrenaline rush of heroic action, or sheer jazzy confidence: whatever it takes to make the experience of reading a novel distinctly more pleasant than visiting an actual morgue. A book such as Michael Dibdin's *The Dying of the Light* may deal unblinkingly with the ravages of age, but it nonetheless finesses a satisfactory if posthumous triumph for its aged and helpless heroine. In this respect *Night Train* seems oddly determined to withhold most of the pleasures associated with genre fiction. Its humor is relentlessly glum and self-lacerating. It lays its situations out with a matter-of-factness that borders on anomie. It undercuts from the outset any sense that its protagonist will rise to heroic possibilities: "This case is the worst case. I wonder: Is it just me? But I know I'm right. It's all true. It's the case." For jazzy confidence, the novel substitutes the stammer of depression, the nearly affectless tone of someone stunned beyond caring: a tone that is not merely the narrative's vehicle, but its reason for existing. The solution to the mystery is to find out why she sounds like that.

Night Train begins and ends with a voice, an assumed voice: an American voice assumed by an Englishman, a tough-guy voice assumed by a woman, a street-hardened voice assumed by someone clearly more vulnerable than she likes to let on. We are a long way from the sort of fictional American one used to encounter in English novels, particularly in English crime novels, who generally took the form of a rugged, plain-spoken tycoon or rancher, his dialogue force-fed with more or less stale Yankeeisms; this was a creature who could not open his mouth or make the slightest gesture without being, by gosh, Typically American. *Night Train* is something else, an English novel conceived in the American language. The only thing lacking is an American pseudonym, such as Eric Knight used in 1938 when he published his accomplished noir comedy *You Play the Black and the Red Comes Up* under the alias Richard Hallas.

But *You Play the Black* was pastiche, and Amis evidently wants a good deal more than that, though he does not deny himself whatever incidental occasions for mimicry turn up along the way. The reader's attempt to figure out just what this book does want to be—a "real" thriller with serious commercial potential, or an exercise in literary parody, or a platform for philosophical inquiry—becomes a narrative in itself, and the signals are just mixed enough to keep us guessing. Is this a case of Serious Novelist moonlighting as Pop Entertainer, or disguising himself as Pop Entertainer the better to carry out some ulterior scheme?

One clue might be the extent to which we are engaged, from the start, as much in the manner as the matter of what is being recounted. This is a novel written with obvious care that strives to convince us that it is flung together by someone lacking any literary ambitions: "These papers and transcripts were put together piecemeal over a period of four weeks. I apologize also for any inconsistencies in the tenses... and for the informalities in the dialogue presentation." It is a spare novel made even sparer by the amount of time it spends digressing from its narrow thread of a plot, spinning itself out into aphoristic asides ("Faxes, which fade in six months, like contemporary love") and anecdotes about the grotesque operations of chance and violence. Detective Mike's very straightforwardness—"I feel the need to give some idea of where I'm coming from"—only furthers the suspicion that we are deliberately being misled.

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The primary false lead is the assumption that this is to be a novel about America. America has figured frequently in Amis's work, in *Money* and *The Information*, and in his collection of essays *The Moronic Inferno*, often as a place big enough and loose enough to give English people plenty of space to fall apart in. In *Night Train*, however, there is not an Englishman in sight to define America by reacting against it, and this all-American place turns out to be a perfect urban vacuum. The setting is an indeterminate "second-echelon American city, mildly famed for its Jap-financed Babel Tower, its harbor and marinas, its university," but setting is already too strong a term. There are many spaces in the novel—a bloodstained bedroom, a police interrogation room, a scientific research institute, Detective Mike's own apartment with the night train rattling by the window—but no sense that they are linked in some shared larger space, that the city is anything more than a string of hermetic chambers. The sense of flatness is accentuated by the shorthand to which its geography is reduced: "You take the MIE around CSU, skirting Lawnwood. And spend twenty minutes stuck in the Sutton Bay tailback."

It is science-fiction territory, complete with futuristic patois and arcane gadgetry. Nothing encourages us to take any real interest in this place: the subject at hand is not living in it but leaving it permanently. *Night Train* is about a single death, a suicide. It examines this event from multiple angles, looking for antecedents and consequences, motives and meanings, but it reverts relentlessly to the event itself: the bare fact of a .22 in the mouth is the pivot around which everything else whirls. The fictional space created by the novel comes to resemble the sort of seedy hotel room that a suicide might select as the scene of his act, a room whose occupant cares nothing about decor or amenities or the view from the window.

The suicide in question is Jennifer, a police chief's daughter, a scientist, a beloved wife, a paragon: "a kind of embarrassment of perfection.... To-die-for brilliant. Drop-dead beautiful." Everything we know about her, of course, we learn from Mike Hoolihan, the "forty-four-year-old police with coarse blonde hair, bruiser's tits and broad shoulders, and pale blue eyes in her head that have seen everything," and at every turn we are reminded of how deeply imperfect and sorrowful an observer she is of her own pain and the world's.

In his previous novel, *The Information*, Amis pitted a failed writer against his talentless but overwhelmingly successful novelist friend. In *Night Train*, we again have a narrator absorbed in the contem-

You deserve to know the facts about....

"Land for Peace"

Can it solve the problems of the Middle East?

There has been much emphasis for years on the "land for peace" formula to solve the long-simmering problems of the Middle East. Translating this slogan into plain English means that Israel should surrender Judea-Samaria (the "West Bank"), Gaza and the Golan to the Arabs. They would establish a Palestinian state. Once that happened, it is thought that peace and tranquility would soon come to the troubled Middle East.

What are the facts?

■ The concept of "land for peace" is a totally new one in the history of the world. It was formulated for one purpose only, namely to pressure Israel to give up territories that it has administered since the Six-Day War of 1967. By its victory in that war, Israel wound up in possession of these territories. Contrary to what many are led to believe, the "West Bank", the focus of today's attention, had never been part of any Arab country. It was part of Palestine, a territorial unit that, by the Mandate of the League of Nations and in line with the Balfour Declaration, had been designated as a national home for the Jewish people.

■ Thus, while the concept of "land for peace" is a brand-new one, the concept that to the victor belong the spoils is as old as history itself and had really never been questioned before. Our own country, of course, following its Manifest Destiny, has benefited greatly and has consolidated its territory by applying this motto. But Israel followed a different path. From the day of victory in 1967, it waited for an offer of peace from the Arabs. But that offer never came. Instead, following the war, The Arabs pronounced their three unalterable "nos:" no recognition, no negotiation, and no peace with Israel.

■ In 1977, President Sadat of Egypt traveled to Jerusalem and presented a peace plan. The Israelis eagerly embraced his suggestion. In exchange for peace and normalization of relations, Israel returned to Egypt the vast Sinai peninsula, together with the city of Yamit; some of the most advanced military installations in the world; the port and naval installations of Sharm-el-Sheik, which safeguards Israel's access to its port of Eilat; and the oil fields Israel had developed and which had made Israel self-sufficient in its energy requirements. And, of course, Israel also gave up the natural buffer against aggression that the Suez Canal and the strategic depth of the Sinai itself provided. It was a first in history. Never before in the chronicle of mankind had the victor returned conquered territory to the vanquished in order to attain peace.

■ One would expect that the concept of "land for peace" would work both ways. After all, should not the Arabs also make some territorial sacrifices for peace? Unfortunately, that is not the case. Every inch of land held by the Arabs is considered "holy Arab soil" and its possession by the "infidels" is inadmissible, intolerable, a blasphemy and a case for "jihad" (holy war). No compromise, no concession is ever possible. Sale of land to Jews is punishable by death. A far as the Arabs are concerned the "land for peace" principle is basically a one-way street.

■ The "land for peace" formulation is now mostly applied to Judea-Samaria (the "West Bank"), Gaza and the Golan Heights. Israel's foes, but also some of its friends, urge Israel to yield these regions to the Arabs in exchange for "peace." But there is no peace, and no peace will come about by Israel's giving up these areas of vital strategic importance to those who are its sworn enemies and who have declared over and over again that they wish to use this land as their launching pad for the final attempt at the destruction of Israel. The conflict in the area is not only between Israel and the "Palestinians." It is first of all between Israel and the hostile Arab nations. With the exception of Egypt,and now also of Jordan, virtually all of them are still in a state of war with Israel.

To none of the Arab countries has it ever occurred that *they* might trade land for peace—as, for instance, yielding the "West Bank", Gaza or the Golan to Israel for the sake of peace and tranquility. Egypt certainly made no territorial or other concessions for the sake of peace and neither did Jordan. Both countries drove very hard bargains to which the Israelis, in their unending quest for peace, acceded. There is never any accommodation on the part of the Arabs, never even a gesture of tentative friendship. For the victor to yield land for peace to the vanquished is a new idea—who knows, it might even be a good one. But it surely would have to work both ways in order to be valid and effective.

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plation of someone else's happier life—"here was somebody who had a real talent for happiness"—but in a spirit not of envy but of terminal depression. The mystery proposed is how this could have happened, how a perfect person could have chosen to die; but from Mike's perspective the mystery is perhaps why anyone should have wanted to live in the first place. Even for a character who is dead before the book begins, Jennifer is unusually wraithlike. Her thinness is designed to keep the focus on Mike, to whom all the things that came so effortlessly to the perfect Jennifer—loving parents, happy marriage, sexual bliss, intellectual achievement—have been denied. If Jennifer has loving parents, Mike was sexually abused by her father; if Jennifer found the perfect husband, Mike has lived with a series of brutal men; if Jennifer didn't need to get high, Mike is a recovered alcoholic just one drink away from liver failure; if Jennifer was both beautiful and sexually fulfilled, Mike describes her own body as "the source of so little pleasure or pride, so neglected, so parched."

Or so Mike says. Jennifer, like everyone and everything else we encounter, is filtered through Mike's voice. We are the prisoners of her language, a stylized dialect which resembles a hardboiled brand of bar talk, bristly with obscenities and technical jargon (more precisely, with obscenities as technical jargon), yet made odd by allusions to Homer and *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, interpolated Latinisms, and unexpected words and phrases like "tantamount" and "votaries" and the stunningly gratuitous "a *shoah* of suicides." Mike's voice is virtually defined by its jarring tonal shifts: "I have to say that that little slope gives me the creeps. This is the body, he is saying, echoing the sacrament: *Hoc est corpus*."

An American reader naturally listens for slips. Few obvious Anglicisms creep in—though Mike does say that someone "apparently twigged that I'm off from CID just now"—but there are some subtly off-key allusions and turns of thought. Would an American cop be likely to refer to "those straggly chicks in their tents on Greenham Common, England," or, indeed, remember the mid-1980s as the period "during the arms buildup toward the end of Reagan's first term, when the nuclear thing was on everyone's mind"?

Amis is obliged to divest himself of the knee-jerk sarcastic wit which is second-nature to so many of his English characters, the means by which they maintain a margin of superiority to their own misery. Americans, or Amis's Americans, speak by contrast in monosyllables, and they are not afraid of a bluntness bordering on banality: "You saved my life. I'd do anything for you. You know that." "I said he got shot in the line for Christ's sake. He got shot in the fucking line." "And you think, Hey. He heard her. She heard him. They talked the same language." When was the last time you thought, "Hey"? Hasn't that particular locution become the exclusive mark of average-guy adspeak populism, in cute pitches for beer or investment bonds or state lotteries?

In a book singularly free of genre pleasure as we know it, the closest thing to fun is to be found in cadence and diction: "Freestyle, Mike.... Flake him. I don't care if he spills and walks." When the cops talk among themselves they often drop the last word of a phrase, so that "pronounce her dead" becomes "pronounce her," and "the last to see her" is "the last to see," as if the endings had become eroded through overuse: "Tom'll push you some compassionate." The text is dense with terminology and catchphrases, so much as to become a kind of annotated glossary of police arcana: ten-card, blowback, "'star or fairy?' murders," "your my-sad-duty routine," "what we call the 'yeah, right' suicide." Like the geographic shorthand, the cop talk serves an antiseptic purpose, making it possible to handle the poisons and the gangrenes of the world with a minimum of contact.

The danger that the dialogue will begin to recapitulate the atmosphere of television cop shows is neatly worked, by way of inoculation, into Mike's ruminations: "TV has also fucked up us police. No profession has been so massively fictionalized." But *Night Train*'s uneasy relation with genre goes deeper than style; it has to do with genre fiction's promise that something will be resolved, that at a bare minimum some explanation will be forthcoming about what we have been taken through. Readers who go looking for a thriller's pleasures are likely to be disappointed. Followers of Amis will be prepared for his rejection of the concept of motive, which is something of a running theme in his earlier work, and becomes here the latest wrinkle of police philosophy: "With TV you expect everything to measure up.... Motive might have been worth considering, might have been pretty reliable, might have been in okay shape half a century ago. But now it's all up in the fucking air. With the TV."

The ways in which *Night Train* refuses to resolve itself seem altogether deliberate. Amis establishes a perfectly acceptable set-up for a mystery, whether a Ross Macdonald novel or an episode of *Silk Stalkings*: it's the old one about the dead girl's secret, the crime against innocence, the corrosive cover-up hidden behind the perfect life, the mysterious death that is the reverse of what it seems. Here, however, the ordinary actions of a crime novel—unpeeling a surface to find other surfaces, following threads to uncover unsuspected relations—fold in on themselves. The lines of relation lead nowhere, the clues are lies; we are yanked back to the same blank and appalling moment of self-murder. If crime fiction mimics healing by making an unbearable premise ultimately satisfying, *Night Train* refuses the cure.

The closest we get to an explanation is Mike's visit to the science institute where Jennifer did work on "Hubble's constant, q-nought, and dark matter." Just as *The Information* contrasted its protagonist's petty doings with the inconceivably vast and slow-moving machinery of the cosmos, Mike's tour guide at the Institute of Physical Problems introduces a different scale of things, as he alerts her to an impending paradigm shift that will give us "an idea of just how fragile and isolated our situation really is." The brief infusion of cosmological perspective—complete with a quick glimpse of "the Bootes Void ... a cavity 300 million light years deep. Where there's zip"—feels like an inrush of bracingly cold air in a book elsewhere claustrophobic to the point of suffocation.

It could hardly be otherwise, given the book's premise. In genre fiction, suicide usually turns out to be other than what it seems. For real suicide is a negation of narrative and its solutions, a refusal to continue with the novel. "The human project implodes, contorts inward—shameful, infantile, writhing, gesturing. It's a mess in there." In a sense, *Night Train* represents a logical application to the rules of detective fiction of the fact that suicide is a crime in which victim and perpetrator are the same. The mystery turns out to be that of a suicide whose final kindness is to offer the comfort of an explanation for the inexplicable. But the explanation doesn't take; the detective demonstrates that the trail itself is a fiction invented by the victim-perpetrator. As for the real motive, who needs one? The world did it. "There's always enough pain."

If Amis's book harbors a core of frustration, it is the inability of the detective to confront the perpetrator, in proper climactic fashion. Mike refrains from judgment—"With suicide... it gets so there isn't any choice"—and her narrative appears to shy away from the savagery of anger embodied in suicide, the anger of the suicide against the world,

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the anger of the world—of friends and lovers and family—against the suicide for having done that to them. The novel focuses on the physical destruction of the body, but that is the least of what suicide accomplishes; it is simply the necessary means toward the violent and voluntary severing of all human ties. Often the response of those left behind is not so much astonishment that the suicide could have abandoned such a wonderful world, but that he could have withdrawn his support from his fellows, leaving them to cope alone with a world made that much worse by such a betrayal.

In such cases, the impulse to mourn the victim is complicated by the futile desire to hate or to punish the murderer. Mike's impulse, by contrast, is to imitate, so that by the last page she is a virtual suicide. It's as if the book had been a lesson in how to arrive at the will to self-destruction. "Copy cat," she has already told us, "is as old as Homer." If Jennifer planted false clues, Mike may in turn be using Jennifer as a false alibi for a death that was chosen long in advance. "Suicide is the night train, speeding your way to darkness": but in that case Mike has lived there all along, sitting alone listening to a compilation tape containing multiple versions of "Night Train," while the actual night train shakes her structure to its foundations.

GEOFFREY O'BRIEN is editor-in-chief of the Library of America and the author of *The Phantom Empire* (Norton) and *Floating City* (Talisman House).

Exile and the Kingdom

BY MOSHE HALBERTAL

Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism by Aviezer Ravitzky translated by Michael Swirsky and Jonathan Chipman

(University of Chicago Press, 303 pp., $17.95)

When it emerged as a political program for the Jews at the end of the nineteenth century, Zionism was a phenomenon for which traditional Jewish life was completely unequipped. It was new and it was perplexing, a movement that eluded categorization in the religious terms and the religious images of the past. It promised a political solution that was neither redemption nor exile. The sovereign Jewish state that was to be established by means of human action was radically different from the traditional Jewish script of the messianic ingathering of the exiles that would be marked by a transformation of the Jewish condition and the human condition as a whole.

And Zionism posed another perplexity to the community of the believers. It was, and it still is, a powerful vehicle of secularization. It attempted to shape Jewish identity by means of such worldly instruments as a shared language, a group loyalty, a land, and a common memory, which would together usurp the foundations of the traditional identity of Jews, the old identity based on commitment to Torah and Jewish law. Yet Zionism was not like the other secularizing forces of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For all its secularity, Zionism was reinforcing particularistic loyalties, and in its way it was allying itself—objectively, you might say—with the Orthodox camp in the war against assimilation. And so Zionism presented a more ambiguous phenomenon than the other rivals of tradition. The Orthodox leadership had to improvise a relationship to a movement that rejected its definition of the community and was nonetheless dedicated to its well-being, to its revival.

The religious community has been deeply divided in its reaction to Zionism since the beginning of this century, ranging from a complete rejection of Jewish nationalism as a satanic rebellion against God to its acceptance as a fulfillment of generations-old messianic expectation. This fascinating and rich spectrum of responses is analyzed in Aviezer Ravitzky's profound and important book. Ravitzky's book is a thorough study of the complicated ways in which a tradition is responding to a crisis that it did not foresee, with creative and contested rereadings of its categories of nationality, history, and messianism. In addition to its contribution to modern Jewish thought, Ravitzky's book is vital to the understanding of the current Israeli predicament.

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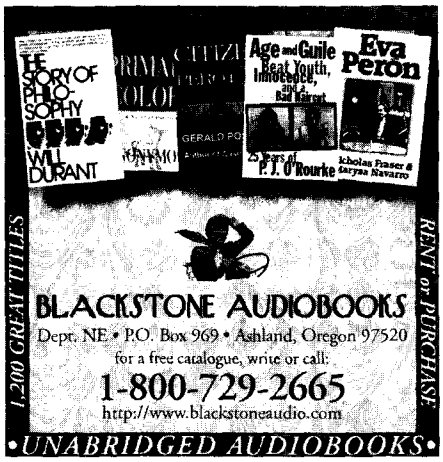

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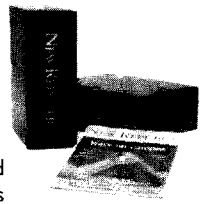

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One of the bitter ironies of Israel's history is that the Orthodox community, which was once an antagonistic observer in the heroic effort of state building, or at best a marginal participant, has become a major actor in Israeli policy. They once despised Zionism, but now the *haredim*—the ultra-Orthodox who constitute 5% to 7% of the Israeli population—are enjoying its fruits; their institutions are subsidized by the state and their leadership is attempting (and succeeding in its attempt) to influence Israel's public life. At the other extreme, the portion of the religious constituency that embraced Zionism as a messianic event gave birth to the settler movement known as Gush Emunim, or the Bloc of the Faithful, which has played a decisive role in Israel's policies toward the Palestinians and the Arab world. A community that is animated by a messianic understanding of Zionism is determining the future of a state that was created in part to break away from the mythic bind of exile and redemption.

Zionism was opposed by the Orthodox on two grounds. The first was their belief that exile from the land of Israel is the historical destiny of the Jews until they are redeemed by God. Thus Zionism was considered a Promethean rebellion, an attempt to replace divine agency with human agency. It represented a failure in withstanding the trial of exile. The Talmud reads the verse from the *Song of Songs*—"I adjure you, O maidens of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and by hinds of the field: do not wake or rouse love until it please [to come of itself]"—as an oath administered by God to Israel that the Jews not "hasten the end" and not force redemption; and this reading became the credo of the anti-Zionists in their advocacy of political quietism. In a typical passage, Rabbi Shalom Dov Baer Schneersohn, the Lubavitcher Rebbe at the turn of the century, wrote that "we must not heed them [the Zionists] in their call to achieve redemption on our own, for we are not permitted to hasten the End even by reciting too many prayers, much less so by corporeal stratagems, that is, to set out from exile by force." And in its attempt to replace the court Jew with the statesman and the soldier, Zionism was scorned, on more practical grounds, as a reckless adventure that risked the future of the nation.

Prior to the establishment of the State of Israel, there was a small migration of *haredim* to Israel; but such settlement of the Holy Land had only a religious meaning, and was proudly indifferent to a political meaning. Rabbi Amram Blau, one of the most extreme opponents of Zionism in the ultra-Orthodox world, declared in Jerusalem in 1947 that "our Holy Torah teaches that we should take no interest in the political realm while in exile, until the coming of the Messiah, may he come speedily and in our own day, and there is nothing in this position to antagonize our Arab neighbors.... We have no interest in living in our Holy Land except to imbibe its holiness and to fulfill the commandments which can only be fulfilled here." This statement was made right before the establishment of the Jewish state. It suggested also that, unlike the Zionists' quest for political sovereignty, the *haredi* conception of the Jewish presence in the land would not agitate the neighboring Arabs and not jeopardize the community of Israel.

It is one of the great lessons of Judaism's responses to Zionism that the same tradition can produce radically different interpretations of the same events. Neither the Holocaust, which exposed the survival strategies of the Diaspora as a complete failure, nor the success of the Zionist movement in establishing a Jewish state against the predictions of the *haredi* leadership, caused any change in the relations of the ultra-Orthodox to Zionism. After the establishment of Israel, as Ravitzky points out, *haredi* opposition took a new form and emphasized a new argument: that Zionism, in providing an identity to Jews based on nationalistic elements such as language, ethnicity, and loyalty, posed a threat to the religious identity that defined the boundaries of the community through loyalty to Jewish law. For its Orthodox opponents, Zionism was seen as a powerful agent of apostasy. As Rabbi Hayyim Soloveichik, one of the greatest Talmudic scholars of the second half of the nineteenth century, observed: "Regarding the 'Zionist sect,' which has now banded and united together by force.... Have they not a bad reputation in their own places, and is not their purpose to uproot the fundaments of [our] religion—and to this end also to take control of all the Jewish communities?... The people of Israel should take care not to join a venture that threatens their souls, and to destroy religion, and is a stumbling block to the House of Israel."

After the establishment of the state of Israel, the *haredi* community in the Holy Land found itself living in a reality that it rejected. Ravitzky shows that the *haredi* community adopted two distinct approaches to the state of Israel. The more extreme group is the Neturei Karta, or "the guardians of the city," which was founded in Jerusalem in 1935, and consists of 10,000 Jews in Jerusalem and some tens of thousands in Europe and the United States. It views the success of Zionism as a temporary victory of diabolical forces in a mythical drama. For the sacred land attracts also the forces of impurity; danger and holiness go hand in hand. The members of Neturei Karta consider themselves to be the saving remnant, the last true Jews, the faithful who did not succumb to the seductions of power and worldliness.

The most difficult of all trials for the faithful was the Six Day War, which looked very much like a miraculous vindication of Zionism. Confronting the Jewish world as it was swept by the power of the victory, Rabbi Joel Teitelbaum, the Satmar Rebbe, and the most consistent and ferocious of the devout anti-Zionists, interpreted the war in this way: "How could anyone imagine that the Holy One, blessed be He, would perform miracles for idolaters? [Such a notion] is pure heresy. The only possible explanation is that this is the work of Satan and his minions.... [Satan] is sparing no effort to deceive the world, for in this trial our redemption is at stake." The State of Israel is not a step toward redemption; it is evil's last stand. In the true redemption, it will be abolished: "It is clear beyond all shadow of doubt that the buildings put up by the heretics and apostates in our Holy Land will all be burned to the ground by the Messiah leaving not a trace behind ... and in their place the Lord, may He be blessed, will raise up for us other buildings sanctified by supernal holiness." Since Zionism has defiled the land, the State of Israel and its institutions have become the impure and the untouchable. The members of this radical *haredi* group prohibit any relations to the state. They do not participate in elections, and they avoid paying taxes or receiving funds for welfare and education from the state. They treat Israel's independence day as a day of mourning.

In its consistent resistance to the state, Neturei Karta is more respectable than the mainstream anti-Zionist *haredim*. The mainstream *haredi* movement participates in Israel's parliamentary life and is represented by the Agudat Israel party. Agudat Israel relates to Israel as to any other country, and its participation in Israel's political life is therefore restricted to the attempt to secure the continuity of the ultra-Orthodox way of life, with no serious interest in shaping the identity of the state. Ravitzky aptly describes this variety of anti-Zionist consciousness as "exile in the holy land." The transformation of Jewish political conditions, the settling of the land of Israel, did not bring the Jews out of exile; it just moved them to another address. As Rabbi Menachem Shach, the

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leader of the Lithuanian wing of *haredim*, declared: "The Jewish people is still in exile, until the arrival of the redeemer, even when it is in Eretz Israel. This is neither redemption nor the beginning of redemption."

To their critics from Neturei Karta who ban any contact with the State of Israel, the Agudah ideologues respond that they relate to the state not as to their own state, but as to any other state. In the words of Rabbi Meir Karelitz, "In all countries of the nations of the world, Jews would seek a *shtadlan* [intercessor, or special pleader] who would act on behalf of the *haredi* Jewry within government circles. Therefore, if there is a possibility of including within the government of Israel a *shtadlan* who will be on guard for the affairs of Torah Jewry, then this must be done unhesitatingly." Indeed, the political representatives of Agudat Israel have performed the role of the *shtadlan* quite impressively, maneuvering skillfully in the Knesset and extracting from various coalition governments generous state support for its educational and religious institutions.

A sense of homelessness at home: this is what has defined *haredi* culture since the establishment of the State of Israel. It is told about one of the brilliant leaders of ultra-Orthodoxy in Israel that when he saw an extremist from Neturei Karta cursing the state of Israel, he said: "This man is a Zionist." How so? "In Poland or in Russia would he thus curse the authorities? He must feel at home." The most blatant manifestation of the indifference of the *haredim* toward the state is the exemption of yeshiva students from military service, which was granted to the ultra-Orthodox in the early years by David Ben Gurion. (He thought that they were a passing phenomenon and would soon be secularized.)

Needless to say, the *haredi* community also rejected the civil religion of the State of Israel, which has an impressive presence in Israel's calendar and public symbols. Independence Day and Memorial Day are not marked by *haredi* Jews. The flag and the national anthem have no presence in their public space. The study of the history of Zionism—which is a central instrument for the creation of civic loyalty—has no place in *haredi* education. The *haredi* community attempted to establish enclaves of public space and education in the midst of a political reality that it completely rejected. It demands modest attire in its public spaces; it seeks to prohibit a desecration of the Sabbath (such as riding in cars) in its streets; it cultivates ideals of character for its yeshiva students that are completely different from the civic virtues of the Israeli citizen-soldier.

In the last decade, however, Israel has witnessed a complete transformation of *haredi* relations to the state. *Haredi* politicians have become involved in issues of state far beyond the preservation of their particularistic interest. In recent years, Agudat Israel has engaged in ongoing attempts to affect Israel's public life, and its politicians have taken firm positions on national issues. In the last elections, 97% of *haredim* voted in an unprecedented turn-out for Benjamin Netanyahu, a thoroughly secular candidate. The "Zionization" of the *haredi* constituency is a reason for anxiety among its leadership. "In the last seven years," claims *Ha-Modiah*, the main *haredi* newspaper, "*haredi* Jews have swarmed through the Knesset building—from all points of view a negative phenomenon. We must examine whether we have not begun to think that this is our building." Traditionally, the Agudat Israel members of Knesset, even if they supported the government, refused to serve in the cabinet. In the present government no *haredi* politician serves as a minister, but Meir Porush, the leader of Agudat Israel, is the deputy minister of housing; but there is no minister of housing, so Porush's deputyship is just a fiction. A *haredi* is running a government agency.

A central reason for the *haredi* integration into Israel's political life is the growing dependency of its members on economic support from the state. In the past, the economic life of the *haredim* was based upon a division of labor between scholars and other members of the community—mainly fathers-in-law, the merchants and the businessmen who supported the scholar's life of study. With the unprecedented expansion and near-universalization of yeshiva learning among *haredi* males, however, the generation of munificent fathers-in-law has disappeared. The state has become the father-in-law, the *mechutan*; and the *haredi* community is dramatically in need of state support. Thus the price of the establishment of the greatest yeshiva community ever to exist in Jewish history has been the "mechutanization" of the Jewish state. The predictions of Neturei Karta that Agudah's reliance on economic support from the state would result in becoming imprisoned, and identified with the state, have come true.

Yet there is a deeper reason for the integration of the *haredim* into Israel's life. The *haredi* leadership failed in its attempt to maintain the consciousness of exile within a Jewish state. Philosophically, it rejected the use of state power

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until the advent of the messianic era. Practically, it succumbed to the temptation of power. The *haredi* newcomers to the power game not only accepted and internalized the fact of Jewish sovereignty, they also threw their support behind the more militant trends of Zionism. The man who consolidated the alliance between the *haredim* and Benjamin Netanyahu was Ariel Sharon, a symbol of military power and not a man known for his devotion to the traditions of his ancestors.

The transformation of the *haredi* community from a marginal observer to a major player in Israeli politics engendered a deep moral and political contradiction. *Haredim* are now more and more part of the system that they delegitimate. Recently Judge Aharon Barak, the chief judge of the Supreme Court, offered a position in the court to Rabbi Shlomo Deichovsky, a religious figure know for his open-mindedness. Barak was responding to complaints that his liberal court is not adequately representative of the religious community. Deichovsky, who consulted the great rabbinic authorities of the generation, declined Barak's offer, arguing that it would be a desecration of God's name to serve with secular judges in the court. The incident revealed that, beyond the problem of representation, there is a deeper problem of legitimation. From the *haredi* standpoint, the Israeli courts, like the legislature populated by secular Jews, has no authority.

As long as the *haredi* community was a distant observer of the affairs of the state, the delegitimation of the state and its institutions was a coherent stance. Even avoiding the draft was in some way morally tolerable. But with the growing economic reliance of the *haredim* on state support, and with the growing

Las Hilanderas

Velázquez's spinners, at work in a large room; behind them, and elevated somewhat, another chamber in which Athena sternly regards Arachne before the tapestry of the rape of Europa that great weaver has completed.

Busy busy busy: they toil and also do
They spin and to what final cause is made
Splendidly clear in the room behind—and, after all,
Above—them: the tapestry is what the thread
Was for, the wonder of substantial image is what
The tapestry was for, and as for the wonder,
It serves itself—crowning the end of what has tied
Know-how to craft and after that to high
Art. And, above all that, as in an afterthought,
The unacknowledging eye of an oriel
Window's blank stare, yielding nothing. The spinners,
Their busy hands, the ladder leaning against
A wall behind them: all these point unwittingly
To the back room of meaning, central—yes—
But from the great workplace seemingly ancillary,
An annex to the very here and now
Where what is spun is skeined without contentiousness,
All that the tale of rival weavers might
Be told, and even told of them, the innocent spinners,
Athena, and Arachne who became
A spider in her pride.
You who would spin a yarn
Like Ovid's of what you see and what you've heard of,
Consider Philomel and Arachne at their looms:
One frames her images from desperate
Necessities of pain and out of outraged justice,
One from the hurt of unacknowledged skill.
One depicts one rape, by mortal king of mortal
Girl, the other figures many, of mortal
Women and boys by gods; one weaving testimony,
A fabric of fact and pure, unthinking self
One plying her shuttle with what she deems to be
More than Olympian skill, filling with vivid
Wonder the texture of the very stuff of fiction
She herself was made of, illustrating
Ovid's stories—her overwhelming immortal opponent
Fashioning rather emblems of her own
Authority. She would not have it that the tales
Told of the mortal lusts of the likes of her
Were truer and were done with better art than all
Her mighty aegis-rattling. But she triumphed.
Arachne hanged herself by the warped fibres she wove
Against, and thereby strangled her own cry—
Even as Philomel's ability to report
Was ripped out of her mouth by him who raped
Her—the unfairly defeated weaver became the one
Who spun the thread she evermore would weave,
Her iridescent but all unimaging web
Doomed to catch what it can of life but all
Too literally. Yet, consider her, among
The spinners and the toilers with us now:
The humming industrious bee, say, gathering from
the world
Of fact the honey of what there is; the spider
Spinning out of its own guts, not the "expression"
Of pain and longing, of delight and hope,
But the more profoundly formed cord of whatever
Is woven into the matter of representation,
Depicting by its structure, rather than, like canvas,
Allowing its blank ungazing surface to
Be carefully defaced with images applied
By an external hand. For, after all,
Who can truly depict whatever *Ow*! or *Ai*!
Actually refers to? show or tell it
In any other way than pointing in-and-outward
With the short finger of shriek that scrapes along
The interwoven pains of torn flesh and bruised bone
And burning floods of horror? All is hearsay
When it comes to that. And that the spider knows;
And keeps her unimaginable feelings to
Herself, and representing not parts of life
But only her high art itself, traps even
The bee, let alone all the nations of the fly, with
What she has woven of her ultimate thread.

JOHN HOLLANDER

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attempts to affect Israel's public life, the old arrangement has been shattered. The big secular parties, Labor and Likud, who need the *haredi* vote for coalition purposes, are courting the *haredim*; but relations between religious and secular forces in Israel are becoming extremely tense, with a widespread belief that they are on a collision course.

It is a sour and regrettable moment in the history of *haredi* ideology and modern Jewish life. The principled opposition to Jewish nationalism, and the attempt to counter the new Israeli ideal type with the figure of the yeshiva student, was an important moral and historical statement. The Jewish world would have been poorer without the *haredi* counterpoint. It served as a constant reminder of the price that the Jews paid for their worldliness, even if it was a price worth paying. Now, with the politicization of the *haredim*, Zionism gains nothing and Judaism loses a great deal.

The changes in the *haredi* ideology are only part of the complicated and tense relations between Zionism and religion. There is also the politics and the culture of the religious Zionists. They amount to ten percent of Israelis, and are represented by the National Religious Party, which has nine seats in the Knesset. Unlike the *haredim*, the leadership of religious Zionism embraced Zionism and participated in the effort of state-building. Ravitzky wonderfully describes the different ways in which religious Zionism responded to the *haredi* challenge.

The first response, and the pragmatic one, was articulated by Rabbi Yitzhak Reines, who founded the religious Zionist party Mizrachi in 1902. He dismissed the *haredi* criticism that Zionism is an attempt to force redemption. Zionism, Reines maintained, has nothing to do with messianism or a substitute identity for Jews; its aims were restricted to one goal, which was the improvement of the political condition of the Jews. Such a goal should be accepted by everyone, believer or unbeliever, who cares about the fate of the Jews. By neutralizing the messianic element, by defining Zionism in exclusively political terms, Reines legitimized cooperation between the religious and the secular on the basis of the practical and narrowly defined goals of Zionism.

Reines's view was the dominant one among religious Zionists until 1967. The National Religious Party of the 1950s and 1960s was an ally of the Labor movement, and its policies were centrist. Yet Reines's attempt to neutralize the mythic and the messianic elements in Zionism did not withstand the eschatological force of the historical drama of Jews in the twentieth century. The Holocaust, the birth of Israel, the Six Day War—destruction and rebirth, victory in the face of annihilation—presented a powerful temptation to apocalyptic interpretation. After the Six Day War, a completely different ideology of religious Zionism overwhelmed the youth of the religious Zionist world.

It was articulated mainly by Rabbi Abraham Kook in the 1920s and 1930s, and concretized by his son Rabbi Zvi Yehudah Kook in the 1960s and 1970s. It met the *haredi* challenge not by emptying Zionism of religious significance, but by endowing it with redemptive importance. The *haredim* are right that only in the messianic times will the gathering of the exiled be allowed, but they are blind to the fact that the messianic era has begun. Rabbi Zvi Yehudah Kook, who radicalized his father's messianic interpretation of Zionism, made the point: "No! It is not we who are forcing the End, it is the End that is forcing us!"

But how can the promised redemption of Israel be fulfilled through the actions of the secular Zionist heretics? Rabbi Abraham Kook, one of the most original Jewish thinkers of this century, provided the terms for such a paradoxical interpretation. A firm believer in progress, Kook saw messianism as the culmination of the teleological movement of history. His messianism was a messianism without a messiah. Deeply influenced by Hegel's philosophy of history, Kook understood the progress of historical redemption dialectically, whereby a higher synthesis of sacred and profane is created. And in his attempt to explain Jewish history, and to reinterpret messianism in Hegelian terms, Kook drew upon the cosmological and mystical symbolism of Lurianic kabbalah. The cosmos, according to the Lurianic teaching, is the result of a set of internal movements in the divine: God contracted himself so as to provide space for the cosmos, and Divine rays of light were sent to that space, but the vessels failed to contain them. The breaking of the vessels and the falling of the rays constituted a cosmic catastrophe. And so the cosmos awaits emendation. This emendation is a long eschatological mission, and it culminates in redemption.

All this dialectical and cosmological machinery was applied by Kook to the understanding of secular Zionism. Secular Zionism is a negation which seems, on its surface, to be heretical; but the ideological pathos of the Zionist pioneers, and their search for social justice and for renewal of the nation's life, are part of a complex dialectical movement toward redemption. The Zionists were breaking with the law in order to expand its horizons; and the overcoming of the narrow spiritual Jewish existence in the diaspora necessitated a shattering of boundaries. Kook, who immigrated to Palestine in 1904, described the pioneers whom he met in the following terms: "These fiery spirits assert themselves, refusing to be bound by any limitation. The weak who inhabit the world of order, the moderate and well-mannered are intimidated by them.... But the strong know that this show of force comes to rectify the world, to invigorate the nation, humanity, and the world...." Thus cooperation between the religious and the secular was legitimated by a notion of secular Zionism as an unwitting but admirable instrument in the engine of redemption.

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"There are people who do not have the slightest idea what an important role they play in the scheme of Divine Providence," Kook wrote. "They are called but do not know who is calling them.... But this terrible concealment will end with a great disclosure of lasting import."

Kook, who died in 1935, did not embody his messianism in a particular political program. The channeling of the messianic energies into a concrete political agenda took place years later, through the work of his son and his disciples, the leaders of Gush Emunim. The State of Israel was looked upon as a divine instrument, and its political travails were interpreted as steps in an irreversible messianic movement. And the main step in the redemptive process, after the establishment of the state, was the Six Day War. In such a light, territorial compromise with the Arabs came to be perceived by the messianic right as a retreat in the scheme of salvation. As one of the leading rabbis of the religious Zionists put it, "all the attempts of the Gentiles to arrest the process of our redemption are futile and will come to nought. All their plans, their idle talk of cutting away the inheritance of our forefathers, of chopping up our holy land and of harming the Lord's people, are in vain. None of this will ever happen."

By means of the settler movement in the West Bank and Gaza, young religious Zionists who were previously marginal to the Zionist effort began to feel that they were nothing less than the vanguard of Zionism. The Labor Zionist establishment, which had a soft spot for the idealism of the religious Zionist youth, and later the Likud government, which used them for defining the future borders of Israel, quickly found themselves to be prisoners of a hard-core ideological grouping. Even among the right, the religious Zionist group is numerically marginal—but it has been at the center of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, exploiting its strategic position in the settlements in the territories. In its determination to use force—constantly testing the boundaries of the Israeli legal system—the settler movement became a political force that no Israeli politician could ignore.

Religious Zionism, then, was shifting toward messianism, and this shift was defining its terms of cooperation with the secular Israelis. The impact of this change upon Israeli politics is one of the cruel ironies in the history of Zionism. Secular Zionism, which was a movement that attempted to break away from the messianic script, became to a large degree dependent on the actions of the messianic latecomers in its midst. Gershom Scholem, a Zionist who was exercised by the price of messianism, posed the following question: "Can Jewish history manage to reenter concrete reality without being destroyed by the messianic claim which [that reentry is bound to] bring up from its depths?" It still remains to be seen whether religious Zionism itself can be awakened from the messianic nightmare, and whether secular Zionism can reclaim the possibility of a Jewish politics that is neither exilic nor eschatological.

In recent years, and in tandem with the deep changes in the *haredi* attitude toward the state, the terms in which religious Zionists justified cooperation with secular Jews have been corrupted. Rabbi Abraham Kook's promise that the secular Zionist rebellion was a paradoxical movement of "return" was never fulfilled. The children of the socialist pioneers did not return to Judaism. Secular Zionism produced a successful and comfortable middle class that showed no interest in intense historical and spiritual dramas. Worse, the heirs of the Labor Zionists began to be perceived by the religious right as an obstacle to the redemptive process. Yitzhak Rabin's agreement to territorial compromise with the Palestinians was interpreted as a betrayal, as a debacle of the eschatological process.

Rabin, the victorious general of the Six Day War and a major secular "instrument" of national renewal, came to be considered 30 years later by the extreme margins of religious Zionism as a "pursuer," a villain of Jewish law who was endangering the fate of the Jews. Of course, religious Zionists, the leadership and the community, were mostly appalled by Rabin's assassination. Yet in its slow and determined questioning of the legitimacy of Rabin's secular government, in its turning the political debate on Oslo into a religious war, in its forgiving attitude toward violence among its members, and in its presumption to have grasped the hidden meaning of history, the spiritual and political leadership of the religious Zionist right created the breeding ground for the assassin. The assassination of Yitzhak Rabin by Yigal Amir, who was a product of some of the central institutions of religious Zionism, is a terrible sign of the failure of religious Zionism to sustain a decent and stable cooperation with secularism in Israel.

And things are not getting any better. In recent months, the troubled relations between the religious parties and the state have exploded in the debate over the Law of Return and the conversion law. The Law of Return guarantees immediate citizenship to Jews if they wish to immigrate to Israel; and it includes converts to Judaism, who are also eligible for citizenship. While Israel accepts the Reform and Conservative conversions that are performed in the United States, the Orthodox parties want to pass a law that would grant the Orthodox court a monopoly on conversions in Israel. Such legislation would mean that Conservative and Reform conversions performed in Israel would not be recognized by Israeli law. The Law of Return is perhaps the most profound enactment of the idea that Israel is a homeland for Jews—and yet the attempt to delegitimate Conservative and Reform courts through state legislation amounts to a terrible alienation of large portions of Diaspora Jews, who deserve to feel at home in Israel. The attempt to resolve the deep disagreement among Jews about Judaism by means of state legislation will destroy the very idea of homeland, which is at the core of Zionism.

It is a moral and political absurdity that in their homeland Jews will have less religious freedom than in any other democratic country. Israel must strive to become a reality in which radically diverse ideas about Jewish culture may coexist. It is interesting that the Orthodox parties, despite their political pressure, cannot recruit a majority to support the conversion law. It is even more interesting that within the Orthodox camp there are attempts to find a compromise that will prevent the estrangement of the Reform and Conservative Jews. The majority of Israelis are searching for a new social contract between religious and secular in Israel, an arrangement that will take the state out of the business of imposing theological definitions by legal coercion.

So the story of Judaism's response to the rise of secular Jewish nationalism is not a happy story. In the last 50 years, Judaism has had access to power for the first time in 2,000 years. The power was established by secular Jews in defiance of religious opposition. But the return to power is a test also of the religious community in Israel; and it is failing the test. The future of this entanglement will depend on the emergence of a new religious understanding that will challenge the previous terms that defined Judaism's relationship to Zionism. (Ravitzky is himself playing a significant role in attempting to articulate such a new understanding.) But this much is certain: the religious parties who attempt to use state power for the purpose of religious coercion will end up corrupting both the religion and the state.

MOSHE HALBERTAL is the author, most recently, of *People of the Book: Canon, Meaning, and Authority* (Harvard University Press).

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CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 4*

we justify making innocent Cubans suffer? Lane believes history will vindicate our hard line. But, if history, unlike Lane, cares about the sufferings of the Cuban people, we will not be absolved.

THOMAS ROBBINS
Rochester, Minnesota

Good sample

To the editors:

I want to commend Matthew M. Hoffman for his article about the census undercount ("Non-Census," February 9). Probability sampling is the only scientifically valid procedure for inferring attributes of the target population. If the Republican arm of the national legislature wants to oppose the proposal to use sampling in the decennial census, they should make the case on the basis of undercoverage, nonresponse, or measurement error—or on all three—rather than the Constitution. I suggest they make use of one of the many expert statisticians who have no political ax to grind and who know the difference between undercount and undercoverage.

LOUIS WIJNBERG
Carrboro, North Carolina

Wise Wieseltier

To the editors:

Leon Wieseltier's diarist ("Epistle to the Hebrews," February 9) is concise, correct, and, above all, necessary. I salute him and you for the courage needed in confronting the ludicrous attempt by American fundamentalist Protestants to tie Jewish intellectuals to their cart. Would that such intelligence and perceptiveness as Wieseltier shows in this column were more widespread in this country and in Israel.

STEPHEN SCHWARTZ
Via the Internet

The legacy of Varian Fry

To the editors:

I enjoyed the excellent article about Varian Fry by Alfred Kazin ("Homage to Varian Fry," February 9). My parents and I were saved by Fry, and, in belated recognition to our indebtedness to him, I set up the Varian Fry Foundation Project as an educational project of the International Rescue Committee. More information about Fry and the foundation can be found on the website, http://www.almondseed.com/vfry.

WALTER MEYERHOF
Menlo Park, California

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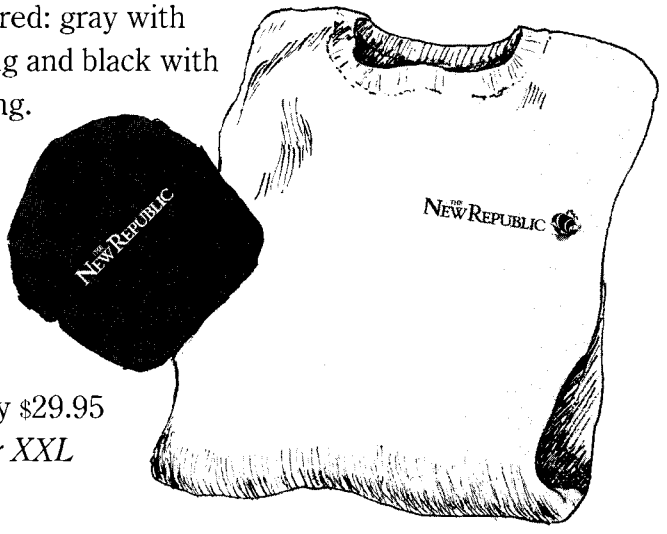

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

The egg women

THE BOLD ADVERTISEMENT IN A local magazine made me stop, fold back the page, and look again. "Become an egg donor or surrogate mother," it urged. "Help an infertile couple become a family!" And then, in smaller print: "There is a special need for Jewish and Asian women." It was that concluding observation that kept me from turning the page. I have known people who expressed a special need for Jewish and Asian women, but this wasn't exactly what they meant. And this ovular entreaty soon gave rise to more unusual speculation. If an egg donor were Jewish, would that ensure, under the Jewish law of matrilineal descent, that the resulting child was Jewish? Does an egg have an ethnic identity? A religious one? Is an egg donor the same thing as a mother? The anxiety about authenticity was suddenly raised to a new height.

IN THE FIELD OF "ASSISTED REPRODuctive technology," mined as it is with ethical dilemmas, egg donation still presents a special case. It's not that it's a new technique or even an experimental one. Over the last decade, about 6,000 women in the United States have conceived with the help of an egg provided by another, usually younger, woman. Yet egg donation challenges some of our most cherished notions of maternity in a way that neither sperm donation nor even surrogate mothering does. For a start, egg donation is harder to excise from the story of a child's conception than sperm donation, if only because the harvesting of women's eggs is a bigger deal. It entails months of hormone treatments followed by a surgical procedure. The donor is around, on the periphery of your life, for a longer time.

ON THE OTHER HAND, AN EGG donor is clearly less involved in the process than a surrogate mother, who carries a developing baby for nine months on behalf of another woman. While surrogacy at least resembles the cultural ideal of motherhood as nurturing and self-sacrificing (even if it is often a for-cash transaction), egg donation is more like sperm donation: a drop-your-genes-and-run proposition. When it comes to telling curious children how they came to be, it's easier to write an egg donor out of the picture than a surrogate mother, but easier still, it seems, to write out a sperm donor. Of 35 sperm donor families interviewed by psychologist Susan Klock, 86 percent had no plans to tell the children that they were the product of somebody other than daddy's seed. Families with children conceived through egg donation, on the other hand, tend to be more confused about whether and how to tell them, according to a recent front-page story in *The New York Times*.

BUT THAT'S NOT THE ONLY ETHIcal oddity of egg donation. In the marketing of eggs to infertile couples, a sort of commercially driven genetic determinism has become the language of choice. Egg brokerages guarantee you "Jewish" eggs. (Warning: they don't write, they don't call.) They promise to provide couples with the SAT and I.Q. scores of prospective egg donors, along with their hair and eye color, their hobbies, their favorite books. In catalog-style entries on their websites, they offer chatty and always glowing profiles. (The same goes for sperm donors: a current listing on the Cryogenic Laboratories, Inc., website, for example, introduces you to Donor 255, who, at "5'11" and 160 lbs. ... has a slim athletic build," "thick, straight dark blond hair," and "an oval face." When he isn't busy with his Ph.D. work in psychology, Donor 255 "plays golf as often as possible." Introverted Donor 182, on the other hand, "likes nature tours, gardening, and maintaining his properties.") These companies are not in the business of surprises. For them, the old adage that you cannot choose your parents or your children is only half true. Filial love needs guarantees, or warranties. Indeed, these companies boast that they can improve on the kind of control you exert when you produce offspring with a spouse picked out, in part, perhaps, for his or her admirable heritable traits. As one sperm-bank director put it, "You will know more about the donor than you do about your husband." The sympathetic reading is that these firms want to take the gamble out of babymaking for couples who are already gambling on getting a baby at all. The less sympathetic reading is that they are a sort of Home Shopping Network for the marketing of chromosomes. QVC DNA.

I DECIDED TO CALL THE COMPANY whose ad I'd seen: the Center for Surrogate Parenting & Egg Donation, Inc., of Beverly Hills, California. The woman I spoke with identified herself as the egg-donor administrator, and she offered a cheery, consumer-oriented philosophy of genetic selection. The center, she said, does not accept egg donations from women who are on welfare or AFDC. "We want to make sure," she explained, "that we are offering our clients quality women, women with goals and aspirations of their own."

THE MOTIVATIONS OF THESE QUALity women might surprise an evolutionary psychologist. On the one hand, they are women with children of their own who "simply" want to help someone else become pregnant. They are "compensated for their time and inconvenience" at a rate of about $2,500 (some centers pay more like $5,000), but few seem to do it primarily for the money. "A lot of them have seen a friend or family member struggle with infertility," says the egg-donor administrator. But then she adds something a little jarring: "I also have girls who say, 'I'm bright. I'm beautiful. I have my own children. I can't see why I shouldn't pass on more of my genetic material.' And I say, 'Oh, and you're modest, too, huh?' Some of these donors are extremely proud women." So, like many men who give to sperm banks, like the doctor who kept using his own sperm in artificial inseminations until somebody noticed that all the babies at his fertility clinic looked an awful lot like him, some women want to spread their genetic goods far and wide. Alpha females! And this is an urge that is apparently unlinked to what we generally call maternal instinct. Counselors at other egg brokerages have found that prospective donors are less discouraged by the idea that they might have children living nearby but unknown to them than by the prospect of big needles bearing hormone injections.

MAYBE ONCE YOU DECIDE TO BUY an egg—at a considerable cost once you add in medical bills—you figure you might as well shop for what you really, really want. But all this, I think, is a little nuts. The catalog-style browsing for top-drawer genes and specific attributes (I want a child who can understand Ashbery, damn it!) subtly corrupts the single most significant attribute of parental love, which is that it is love for what one has been *given*. Its unconditionality is owed not least to the fact that the children have not been designed by the parents. But here are these egg dealers, proposing to cancel the surprises and the contingencies that test and toughen the bonds between parents and children. I'm not sure quality is worth it.

MARGARET TALBOT

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